

TOWN OF NORMAL

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



TOWN OF NORMAL

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040

Complete. Connected. Compact.

Prepared by



115 East Washington Street, #M103
Bloomington, Illinois 61701

In cooperation with the



The preparation of this report was financed in part through a planning grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration.

Letter from the City Manager

To: Residents, Businesses, Employees, Visitors, and other Town of Normal Stakeholders
From: City Manager Mark Peterson
RE: *Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan*

10/2/2017

The document you are about to read is unlike anything I have seen in a municipal government career spanning more than 35 years, almost 30 of those years in the Administration of the Town of Normal.

The Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan 2040 is an exhaustive analysis of the current state of Normal, our identity, priorities, challenges, opportunities, and hopes for the future.

This robust document goes far beyond the traditional topics of “comp plans,” usually confined to strategies for land use, transportation, and the development of infrastructure. It does, I believe, an effective job of envisioning Normal in the year 2040, identifying the paths to that vision, and the potential problems we may encounter making the journey to it.

Such a comprehensive roadmap requires comprehensive outreach to the community’s stakeholders and we owe an enormous debt to those people whose names appear as members of our advisory groups on the first few pages. Their input and hard work has been invaluable.

They have mapped a journey to a future Normal that endeavors to create a Complete, Connected, yet Compact community:

Complete in that it includes diverse and inclusive neighborhoods, streets, centers, and destinations of every kind.

Connected physically, socially, and technologically in ways that ensure constant and multiple interactions within Normal and with our global society.

Compact with a wide variety of all uses contained in a contiguous community with a minimum of sprawl.

I hope your consumption of the material herein stirs your passions as it has mine. I will be so very proud to see this plan adopted, pursued, and achieved.



Mark Peterson
City Manager

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Kari Sandhaas, Autism McLean
Chuck Scott, ISU
Dave Shields, Vision Committee
Joe Tulley, Uptown Normal



Introduction and Executive Summary

“We plan our work and
we work our plan.”

—Mayor Chris Koos



Welcome to the Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan!

A Comprehensive Plan is a community’s core statement of development policy and principle. It establishes a vision for growth and development and addresses housing, infrastructure, recreation, transportation, and other topics that influence land use. In other words, the Comprehensive Plan helps us decide what we want our community to be in the future and figure out how to make it happen!

Beyond the straightforward aspects of a Comprehensive Plan—what land uses do we want in which locations—**The Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan considers cultural needs, social equity, public health, resource efficiency, and the changing state of technology.** This holistic approach is a direct result of feedback from community members, expressed during the outreach phase of the planning process, and a bold vision set forth by the mayor-appointed Vision Committee. With the commitment of Town leadership and a can-do community attitude, the implementation of the *Comprehensive Plan* will ensure that Normal remains a vibrant and vital place for future generations to call home.

Planning Context

Normal begins implementation of this comprehensive plan at a moment of uncertainty across social, political, and environmental backdrops. This uncertainty is found at multiple levels of society.

Nationally, the United States is experiencing social, economic and political divisions resulting from profoundly divergent views of governing. Clashes on fiscal policy stymie progress on infrastructure, regulatory enforcement and resource allocation. Environmental policy vital to the national interest is also affected by these divisions. Formerly stable government programs have ended or been radically altered.

In the wake of two years of budget crisis, **State of Illinois** obligations to local governments, social services, and the public remain unmet, and the state's fragile financial condition is an ongoing challenge. Local government cannot rely on state funding, and must seek alternatives. The state's financial situation damages the reputation of Illinois and hampers economic development initiatives.

In **McLean County**, local governments, educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations, and regional corporate and industrial enterprise are negatively affected by the state's precarious finances. The challenges are compounded due to employment loss as a result of downsizing

by one major employer and closure of another, as well as slowing of population growth and the housing market in the aftermath of the recession. In recognition of these challenges, a wide variety of public and private stakeholders, including area businesses, economic development organizations, and local governments, band together as BN Advantage to lay out a road map for economic development and identify target industry sectors most suited to the community.

The **Town of Normal** has a solid foundation for advancing Smart Growth policies and a national reputation for bold and innovative community development. This work continues with the full sanction of Town policy makers and under the capable guidance of Town staff. Normal is primed to benefit from the example of communities nationwide which, realizing that local resources must deliver more, have gained passage of referenda generating local revenue support for municipal services and capital investments. While the Town's fiscal status continues in a recessionary pattern with reduced tax and utility revenues, the Town Council and staff pursue balanced solutions.

COMMUNITY QUICK FACTS

Demographic Profile

54,902 Total Population in 2015 ⁴	\$85,643 Median Family Income ²	23.5 Median Age ¹
50.4% Bachelor's Degree ²	\$52,102 Median Household Income ²	85.1% Caucasian ¹

Population doubled since 1970⁴
Population is expected to grow by 13,800 people by 2040⁴
Growth rate expected to be slower compared to previous decades⁴

Housing Profile

20,915 Total Housing Units ²	\$827 Median Rent ²	\$304,000 Avg. Sale Price of a New Home ³
51% Home Ownership ⁵	\$162,300 Median Home Value ²	2.57 Average Household Size ²

5,500 more housing units will be needed to accommodate the new growth.
Normal has a potential to add nearly 4,000 new residential units through already-approved annexation agreements.

Other Facts

18.3 Corporate Area in Square Miles ¹	425 Lane Miles of Street	2.5 times Growth in Area Since 1970
2,861 People per Square Mile ¹	15 Miles of Constitution Trail	800 Fewer People per Square Mile Compared to 1970

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census
- 2 2011–2015 American Community Survey
- 3 Bloomington-Normal Realtors Association 2016 data
- 4 Projections as published in the Town of Normal Community Snapshot and Outreach Report
- 5 Town of Normal Community Snapshot and Outreach Report

Planning Process

To succeed, a comprehensive plan needs:

- A **vision** generated by the people in the community and rooted in careful analysis of existing conditions, and
- A **clear course of action** to show how best to achieve the community’s vision.

This 24-month-long process involved three distinct phases as outlined in Figure 1. The *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report* and the *2040 Vision Report*, summarizing phase 1 and phase 2 respectively, were published in 2016. These documents are available on the plan website (www.planitnormal.com), Town of Normal website (www.normal.org) and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission’s website (www.mcplan.org).

Work conducted during the first two phases became the basis for phase 3. Several Advisory Groups met to identify goals, strategies, and actions pertinent to the *Vision Plan*. This phase ended with the creation of the *Comprehensive Plan*, which provides a clear course of action. Keep in mind that comprehensive plans are advisory in nature, and are implemented through the adoption of a zoning ordinance and map and other municipal codes conforming to this plan. However, by adopting a Comprehensive Plan, the Town is making a statement of official public policy and should therefore use the plan to guide development decisions.

FIGURE 1: Phases of the Comprehensive Plan



Community Snapshot

This phase included research, data analysis, review of existing plans, regulations, and programs.



Community Outreach

This phase captured the voices of many individuals and organizations to gain insight into their desires for the future of Normal.



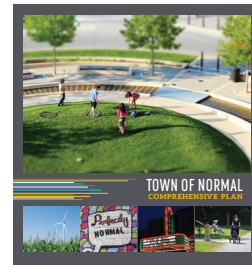
Visioning

The Town’s longstanding visioning process was integrated into the comprehensive planning process. A 25-member Vision Committee appointed by the mayor helped establish a bold vision for the Town of Normal.



Advisory Groups

Nearly 80 community members participated in seven Advisory Groups to help identify goals, strategies, and actions to help achieve the vision.



The Final Plan

The final plan includes land use recommendations, growth priorities, maps, metrics, and implementation strategies.

Phase 1: Report titled **Community Snapshot and Outreach** published in April 2016

Phase 2: Report titled **Town of Normal 2040 Vision** published in November 2016

Phase 3: Report titled **Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan** (the current report) published October 2017

It is designed to an action-oriented, living and breathing document. The three-ring binder format and the individualized alphanumeric page numbers for each chapter are designed to facilitate necessary amendments or additions to the document throughout its implementation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Many members of the community contributed their voices, time, and talent to shape this *Plan*. The information below provides a quick snapshot of community involvement at various stages of the planning process.

Community Outreach JULY TO DECEMBER 2015

Extensive outreach efforts, using both traditional and non-traditional methods and conducted over a period of 6 months, captured the voices of a diverse cross-section of the community. Many stakeholders, including several groups working with underrepresented or vulnerable demographics such as renters, low-income populations, and seniors, were interviewed to gain a holistic perspective of community issues.

1,718
Community
Voices

27
Community
Partners

12
Outreach
Events

40
Stakeholder
Interviews


Many Public
Presentations
& News Articles

Vision Committee APRIL TO OCTOBER 2016

The Town's longstanding tradition of establishing a Vision Committee every five years was integrated into the comprehensive planning process. The Vision Committee appointed by Mayor Koos consisted of residents, entrepreneurs, community leaders, students, and other members of the workforce and the community at large who brought a range of perspectives and experiences. This group accepted the *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report* as their initial input, conducted additional surveys, and gathered additional data to establish a shared vision, core community values, and critical frameworks upon which to build. Their report, the *Town of Normal 2040 Vision*, was accepted by the Town Council in November 2016.

7

Meetings



25-Member Committee Appointed by the Mayor

Advisory Groups JANUARY TO JUNE 2017

Many members of the community, including Vision Committee members, subject matter experts, and other interested individuals, participated in the Advisory Groups. The goals, strategies, and actions outlined in the Economic Vitality, Community Identity & Public Places, Town & Gown, Humanitarian & Social Aspects, and Health & Sustainability Elements were developed and vetted by these groups. The feedback provided by the Regional Housing Study Steering Committee was used to create the Housing Element, and Town staff with subject matter expertise in various infrastructure systems contributed their time and talent to inform the Infrastructure Element.

78
Advisors


7 Advisory Groups

21
Meetings

Foundations for Normal's Future

The Town of Normal enjoys advantages not available to all communities. Key among these advantages is that there are few or no significant problems that must be addressed immediately. Thanks to this solid foundation, projects for the future involve building on its strengths and guiding future growth.

Normal's current strategic advantages include:

- **Strong and appealing community identity:** Normal is often described as having a small-town feel with big-city amenities.
- **Solid community anchor in Illinois State University:** The university is the Town's largest employer; the source of many of the Town's residents, customers, and visitors; and a driver of innovation and economic development in the region.
- **Relatively young, well-educated population:** A relatively high percentage of ISU graduates choose to stay in the area as adult residents, and Normal also draws non-ISU-affiliated young talent from across the nation and the world.
- **History of economic stability:** Thanks to major employers and industries (e.g., education, healthcare, agriculture, and manufacturing), the Town has a history of economic strength even during difficult times.
- **History of rational, forward-thinking leadership rooted in careful planning and bold policymaking:** Multiple "generations" of Town mayors, Council members, city managers, staff, and others have negotiated, nurtured, and implemented a shared vision of what the Town could and should be while maintaining carefully balanced fiscal policies.

Like every community, the Town of Normal also faces serious challenges, both current and future. These include:

- **Changing fiscal fundamentals**
 - Declining revenues from sources like sales and utility taxes
 - Unstable state and federal support
 - Need to diversify the local economy rather than relying on a few major employers
- **Rapid technological developments**, which have so far largely left the public sector behind
- **Global environmental crises** like climate change
- **Changing demographics and social conditions**

Vision and Values

Guiding the Town's planning efforts are several key commitments and values laid out in the *Town of Normal 2040 Vision* report. The report's overall vision statement is: ***We have a place for you in our vibrant, prosperous, and connected community.*** Two major themes underpin the vision: *sustainability and technology.*

Vision 2040 identifies all three legs of sustainability—fiscal, social, and environmental—as critical aspects for the Town's future. To achieve fiscal sustainability, the Town will continue to focus on infill and redevelopment, maintain existing assets in good condition, and seek innovative funding and financing mechanisms for governance. In pursuit of social sustainability, the Town will strive to be a great place to live, work, and play for residents of all backgrounds, income levels, and abilities. To maintain environmental sustainability, the Town will continue to be a leader in responding to climate change and working with, not against, our natural environment.

In the area of technology, the Vision Committee notes that while the direction of technological process is impossible to predict in granular detail, it is possible to identify several important themes with respect to how our society is currently changing and likely to continue changing over the coming years. Our lives will continue to become increasingly interconnected, affecting everything from personal telecommunications and entertainment to essential systems like transportation, education, and healthcare. As a society—and this is especially true of the public sector—we are still trying to understand and respond to the complex effects of these changes.

Vision 2040 positions the challenges and opportunities of technology and sustainability as positive rather than negative. Technological progress is inevitable and accelerating; local governments (and governments at all levels) are adapting to new fiscal realities; social systems are being re-examined, both for good and ill; and communities like Normal continue to lead in acknowledging the reality of climate change and other sweeping environmental shifts. We can either plan for these changes and determine how to take advantage of them, or we can allow them to overwhelm us, forcing us into a cycle of reactivity rather than proactivity. This report recognizes the coming challenges and presents plans to address them efficiently.

THE VISION for 2040

We have a place for you in our vibrant, prosperous, and connected community.

We aspire to go above and beyond Normal in:

- 1. Engagement.** Ours is a resourceful and collaborative community that fuels civic engagement and inspires meaningful and generous contributions from residents of all walks of life.
- 2. Economy.** Ours is an innovative and diverse economy in 2040 that has grown from what it was in 2016.
- 3. Spaces.** Ours is an inter-related community visible through safe and accessible spaces that people love.
- 4. Social equity.** Ours is a compassionate community that strives for social consciousness, responsiveness, and justice.
- 5. Multiculturalism.** Ours is an inclusive and welcoming community that celebrates our unique and diverse backgrounds, identities, cultures, and talents.
- 6. Lifelong learning.** Ours is an engaged and inquisitive community that encourages growth and supports lifelong learning.
- 7. Creativity.** Ours is a creative community that promotes art and artists as an essential infrastructure and values art as a powerful process for bringing people—and ideas—together.
- 8. Well-being.** Ours is an equitable health and wellness system, ensuring the healthy choice is the easy choice.

Planning Elements

The themes of sustainability (fiscal, social, and environmental) and technological advancement run through the seven planning “Elements” of this *Comprehensive Plan*. The key concepts of each of these Elements are summarized below.

Housing



Normal (like the surrounding region) is generally overbuilt and has more housing units than can be absorbed by 2020. Making matters more complicated is Normal’s potential to add nearly 4,000 new residential units through already-approved annexation agreements. These developments may add to the oversupply of single-family detached housing while increasing sprawl and associated infrastructure costs. Another potential challenge is affordability. Normal’s housing stock is reasonably priced for most people, but affordability remains a concern for certain populations, including recent graduates, young professionals, seniors on fixed incomes, people with disabilities, and low- to moderate-income households. The Town needs to close gaps between housing demand and supply by responding to changing demographics and through a commitment to smart growth. Core strategies include:

- Address a lack of housing that appeals to young professionals and empty nesters by ensuring that Town policies are set up to allow and encourage developers to respond adequately to the changing demands.
- Use regulations, incentives, and collaborative programming to help preserve and repurpose the existing housing stock, and to add affordable and supportive housing to the inventory.
- Support aging in place.

Health & Sustainability



Recognizing the ways in which the health of individuals and the natural environment are intertwined—and taking actions to improve both—has become one of the defining challenges not only for Normal, but for the entire global community.

This Element pushes the Town of Normal to consider health in all policies and continue to be a regional leader in environmental stewardship. These policies are driven by several key principles: a commitment to smart growth and sustainability; the value of a vibrant local food system; responsible stewardship of our natural resources; and fiscal sustainability. Key strategies in line with these principles include:

- Encouraging compact infill development that places less strain on the natural environment and puts active modes of transportation on equal footing with driving.
- Facilitating a vibrant local food system that takes advantage of Normal’s location in Central Illinois, one of the most productive agricultural regions in the world. A local food economy that produces fresh, healthy food and supports a network of businesses that tap into that resource and be an asset in reducing the region’s high obesity rate.
- Protecting and enhancing open and green spaces to provide healthy recreation opportunities and make a positive environmental impact.
- Promoting environmental sustainability in the built environment.

Economic Vitality

This Element outlines policies that position Normal to complement, and where appropriate to lead, economic development efforts in the spirit of BN Advantage. *Vision 2040* notes that technology should be central to Normal’s approach to governance. To embrace innovation and build a stronger, more diverse economy, Normal should foster a rich entrepreneurial ecosystem rooted in the creative economy, small and local businesses, and a strong local food system.



As technology redefines every aspect of our society, Normal should:

- Become a Smart City with a thriving Information Communications and Technology (ICT) sector and an open, proactive acceptance of disruptive innovation; modernize its operations and services through smart urban systems; and enable community-wide connectivity through high-quality technology infrastructure.
- It calls for the Town to play a key role in the development of an Innovation District centered on Illinois State University (ISU), Uptown Normal, and Advocate BroMenn, bolstered by major regional actors such as State Farm. As an exemplar of place-based economic development, this district would serve as a regional hub for the entrepreneurial community and a proving ground for civic technologies and innovation.
- Rethink its approach to planning and land use for its economic centers.
- Deploy sensible growth policies, tax and fee structures that are aligned with the Vision, more efficient service delivery, and innovative funding and financing mechanisms.

Community Identity & Public Places



Normal's identity is defined by a culture of lifelong learning; agricultural roots; family-friendly neighborhoods; a wealth of arts and entertainment amenities; a forward-thinking and sustainable approach to community development; and a vibrant and prosperous twin city. This Element calls for the Town to celebrate its culture and history and use its public spaces as canvas to preserve and enhance its sense of place.

Key strategies include:

- Protect and promote Normal's rich history.
- Encourage compact, mixed-use development, thoughtful and distinctive architecture, human-focused design, and the incorporation of public art, to create multifunctional public spaces with a strong sense of place.
- Embrace and celebrate cultural diversity through events and programming and urban design in the public realm.
- Foster community engagement and leadership.

Humanitarian & Social Aspects



In an age of increasing diversity and rising inequality, the Town must reaffirm its commitment to the core values, established in *Vision 2040*, of social equity and multiculturalism. This Element attempts to translate that commitment into policy.

The Town of Normal can take a number of steps to ensure equal opportunity for all of its residents. It can effect change directly through internal policies, local ordinances, public-private partnerships, and intergovernmental agreements; or pursue less direct means of influence such as education and advocacy and facilitating collaboration among third parties such as human service nonprofits, higher education institutions, Unit 5 schools, and other local governments. This Element proposes:

- Building awareness, understanding, and empathy for people of all backgrounds, circumstances, and abilities.
- Fostering informal multicultural interactions.
- Considering the needs of all residents when designing public places and programming.
- Achieving equitable outcomes in law enforcement and the legal system.
- Reducing economic inequality and promoting opportunity for all residents through inclusive economic development efforts, support for public and private human service providers in Bloomington-Normal, provision of a greater supply of affordable and supportive housing, support for equitable transportation options, and pursuit of "Compassionate City" initiatives that use technology to address social disparities.

Town & Gown



Normal is a college town. Higher education institutions shape Normal's economy and culture in myriad ways, both direct and indirect. Likewise, the desirability of the Town, is an important factor in the success of these institutions.

Normal and its higher education institutions have a long history of working together. Both Town & Gown can and should expand their coordinated efforts. This plan calls for:

- Enhanced policy- and staff-level cooperation with respect to workforce and economic development, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, and improving community engagement on Town-Gown issues.
- Increased collaboration in land use planning and development, particularly in the area in and around ISU's campus—referred to here as the University Influence Zone (UIZ)—where the university has its greatest impact on land use.

The UIZ, defined for the first time in this plan, encompasses ISU's campus and properties, the portion of the Main Street corridor that runs along the campus; and the neighborhoods adjacent to the campus. This plan calls for the Town and ISU to work together in the UIZ to enhance the public realm, promote smart growth, and strike a balance between supporting the student population and protecting the traditional character of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

Infrastructure & Public Safety



The Town of Normal has largely kept ahead of the national curve in keeping its infrastructure in good condition. However, the Town faces many of the same difficulties as other communities, including rising costs; decreasing physical space for infrastructure in all three dimensions; large ongoing maintenance commitments resulting from decades of sprawl; and the disruptive effects of new technologies.

The Town must be prepared to meet these challenges by:

- Preserving existing systems in good condition. Future growth must be prioritized by infrastructure availability. This is the key principle for long-term fiscal sustainability of the community.
- Maintaining and developing systems at a high standard, giving special attention to connectivity, both technologically and multi-modally.
- Increasing coordination between a complex web of public and private entities that own and operate infrastructure systems and the agencies that manage them, and anticipating changes on multiple fronts.
- Anticipating and managing change.

Planning Framework

The Planning Framework is a new approach to land use planning. In recent years, Normal has earned a distinctive reputation based on its embrace and pursuit of sustainable strategies for growth. Based on the bold vision set forth by the *2040 Vision Report* and the goals established in the seven planning Elements described above, the Planning Framework calls for development and land use that moves the Town of Normal closer to being a *complete, connected, and compact* community.

Complete . . .

- With **neighborhoods** that provide a variety of housing choices, at various price points, to welcome residents of all backgrounds.
- With **streets** that support healthy and active lifestyles by promoting walking, biking and transit. Street vistas will capitalize on building design, scale, architecture, and proportionality to create interesting visual experiences and make every place unique and enjoyable.
- With vibrant and thriving **centers** of all sizes that serve as neighborhood destinations and employment nodes.

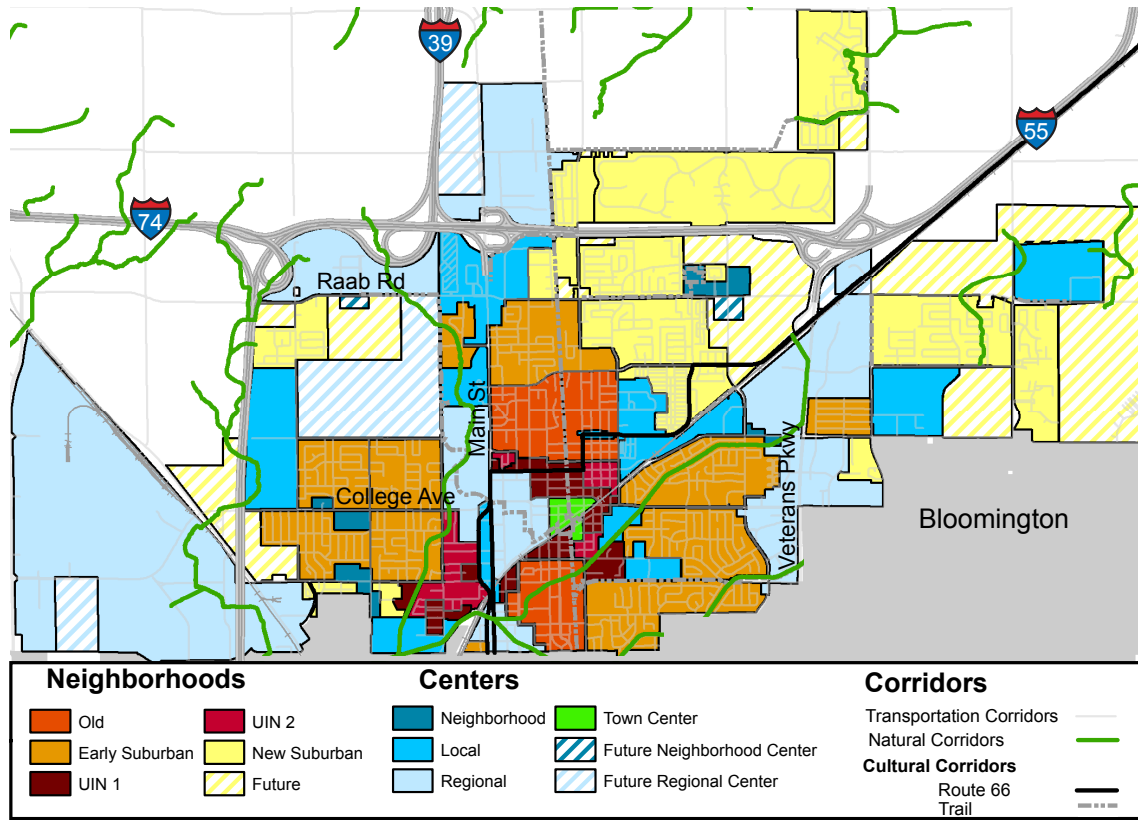
Connected . . .

- **Physically**, with neighborhoods connected to each other and to centers, providing convenient access to grocery stores, quality public schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas. An interconnected network of streets, sidewalks, and trails will make walking, biking and access to transit easy for all people.
- **Socially**, with gathering places—like streets, parks, front porches, coffee shops, ice cream parlors—that create informal opportunities to meet, get together, and socialize with neighbors.
- **Technologically**, with connected urban systems that deliver services more efficiently to the Town's neighborhoods and centers. Ubiquitous access to high speed, affordable and secure broadband will empower our residents, businesses, and institutions to thrive in this 21st century economy.

Compact . . .

- With **dense development and a mix of uses** that support safe and convenient access to a variety of destinations by any mode of transportation, while contributing positively to fiscal and environmental sustainability.

MAP 1: Planning Framework



The Planning Framework represents a slightly different approach to land use planning by grouping Normal’s geographies into three broad categories—Neighborhoods, Centers, and Corridors. These are further broken down into smaller places types. Neighborhood place types are distinguished according to when they were built—Old, Early Suburban, New/Future Neighborhoods or the influence on them—University Influence Neighborhoods; Centers are classified according to their scale and the geographic area they serve—Neighborhood, Local, Regional and Town Center; and Corridors are sorted according to functions—Transportation, Cultural, or Natural Corridors.

This approach is a deviation from the past where land was divided by individual use, such as low-density residential, medium-density residential etc. This new approach allows the Town to take into account unique characteristics, needs, and assets of each “Place Type” and provides a more intuitive, flexible rubric by which to shape future development. This Framework is further supported by a growth prioritization map that takes into account the availability of existing infrastructure and the goals outlined in the Elements Section to prioritize land developments into three tiers—1, 2, and 3.

The Planning Framework also provides a system for quantifying the status quo and moving methodically toward the goals of the *Plan*. This approach makes the new *Plan* a more intuitive, more flexible resource than past comprehensive plans, while also maintaining clear, firm principles to guide future planning.

Implementation

A great deal of time, effort, and expertise went into developing the *Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan*. Putting the plan into action will take even more time, resources and effort.

We urge readers to keep this in mind as they read and work from the *Plan*: The *Plan* is intended to serve the Town for twenty years. The Town—both its leaders and its citizens—should approach the Plan in five-year “blocks.” The *Plan* sequences and prioritizes actions and geographies for Town decisions based on the vision and the goals set forth in the *Plan*. For example, areas designated as Future Neighborhoods or Centers should further be read in conjunction with the growth priorities map, Map 2, that takes into account available infrastructure and annexation status. Several actions are denoted with a “(Q)” at the end to indicate that they are quick wins.

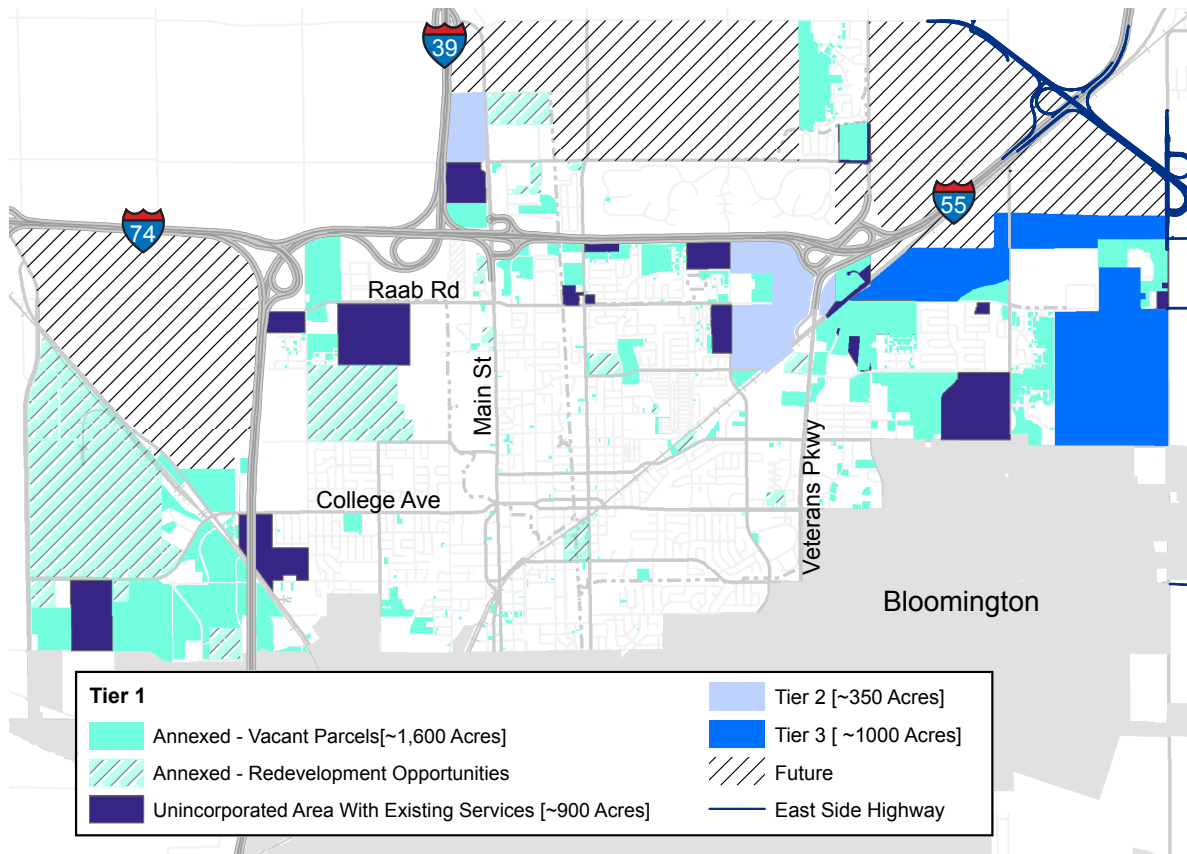
It is also worth noting that while the *Plan* is comprehensive in its scope, it is inherently limited in its specificity. In many cases, **further prioritization and planning on specific topics or geographies** will be necessary to carry out this plan’s general recommendations. The Town should integrate the recommendations of this plan into planning, budgeting, and capital improvement process of all its departments. The Town should work towards aligning regulations and incentives to move the goals of this plan forward.

The vision and aspirations of this plan are far bigger and deeper than what the Town government can accomplish alone. The Town should invite everyone—other public agencies, educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations, the private sector, and citizens—to be partners in realizing the plan. Planning and **collaborating** with these other organizations will be critical not just for this plan but for the success of regional economic development efforts like BN Advantage that are heavily reliant on the quality of place.

The recommendations in this *Plan* depend upon and result from extensive data gathering. Likewise, many of the strategies and actions recommended here emphasize the importance of collecting even more high-quality **data to track progress** and guide future decisions.

The planning values of sustainability, diversity, and responsibility are old-fashioned, conservative values applied through fresh thinking and bold policy. These are the values and strategies that will provide sound, smart growth to the Town of Normal to the benefit of current and future generations.

MAP 2: Growth Priorities





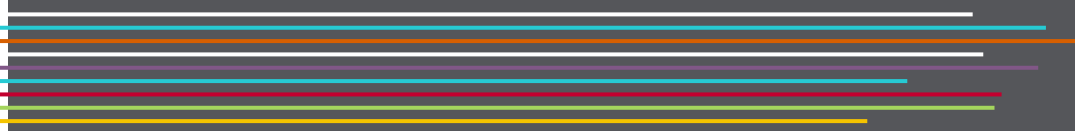
NEIGHBORHOODS



CENTERS



CORRIDORS



PLANNING
FRAMEWORK

A community is a conglomeration of places where people live, learn, work, play, and do business. Collectively, these places—their physical forms, the connections and relationships between them—shape a community.

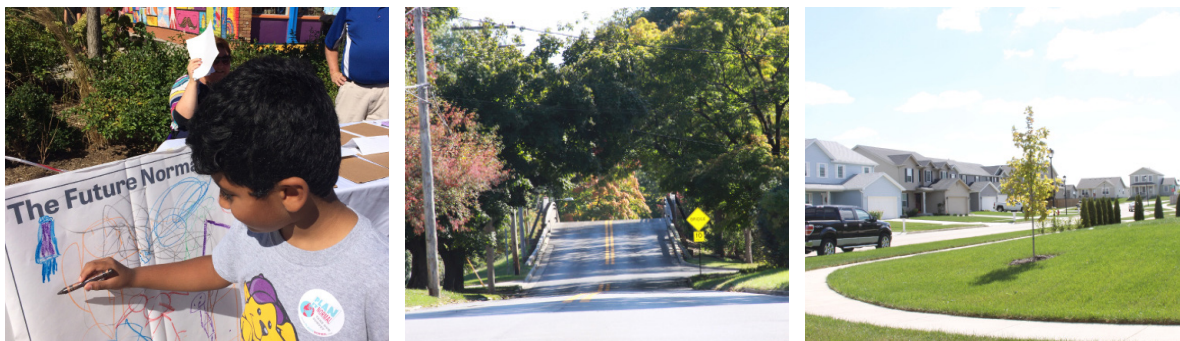


Growth and Development in Normal

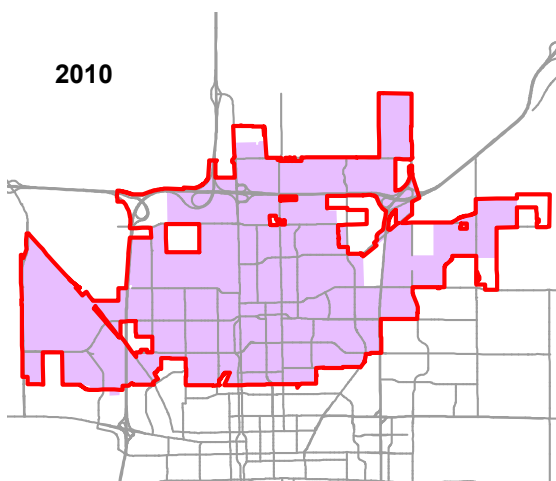
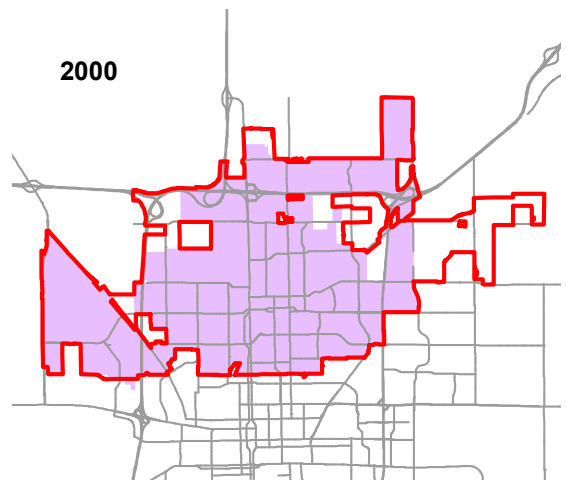
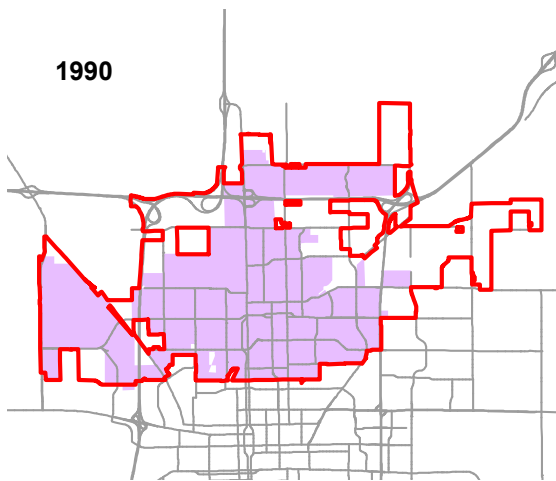
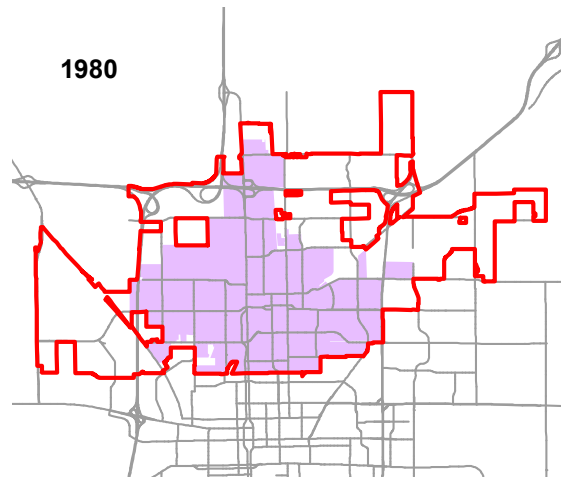
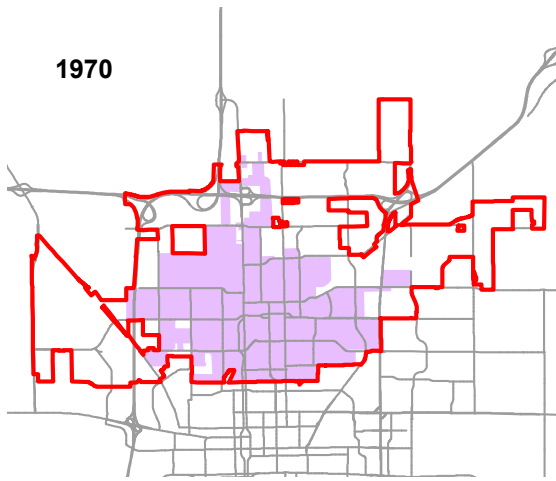
Normal's physical form has evolved significantly over time, driven by diverse but interconnected forces, including technology, economic factors, architectural fashions, and shifts in residents' expectations. The strongest of these forces was the invention of the automobile. Prior to the proliferation of automobiles, development generally followed the traditional urban grid with compact blocks and mixed land uses. Once cars became the dominant mode of transportation, development patterns shifted to follow a suburban-style, lower-density model with less accommodation for other modes of transportation. At the same time, zoning regulations written with the new model in mind further stacked the deck in favor of low-density development while making traditional development with mixed uses more difficult. These changes literally reshaped Normal, as the Town's boundaries grew significantly faster than the population to accommodate the new style of development [See Map F1]. Cities and towns across the United States followed a similar progression.

Over time, the costs of this kind of development have become clear. Residents need a car to get around efficiently, regardless of whether they want or can afford one. Local governments have to spend more on infrastructure expansion and maintenance. The natural environment is degraded by higher levels of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. And the emphasis on enforcing certain types of use often comes at the expense of form: Cities look and feel eerily similar, with relatively little local character to differentiate one neighborhood, street, or community from another.

Normal has 150 years of growth and development to its credit, but much of its growth is fairly new—within the last five decades—and has followed this suburban-style development pattern. In recent decades, the Town has taken some steps to apply smarter, more sustainable growth concepts, such as denser, mixed-use developments, multimodal transportation options, and design that is environmentally sustainable and fosters a sense of place. These principles, however, have only consistently been applied within small geographies such as Uptown and segments of Main Street.



MAP F1: Corporate Boundary Changes Since 1970



**Population nearly doubled
Corporate Area increased by 2.5 times
About 800 Fewer People/Square Mile**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area</i>	<i>Pop. Density</i>
1970	26,396	7.4 SqM	3,667/SqM
1980	35,681	9 SqM	3,963/SqM
1990	40,023	11.9 SqM	3,363/SqM
2000	45,386	15.2 SqM	2,985/SqM
2010	52,497	18.3 SqM	2,861/SqM

- Major Streets
- Historic Corporate Boundaries
- 2015 Corporate Boundary

The Town's 2040 Report (a.k.a. the Vision Report), received and endorsed by the Town Council in 2016, recognizes this newer growth philosophy as a step in the right direction and urges policymakers to apply smarter growth principles more aggressively and broadly across the entire community. The Vision and Core Values expressed in the *2040 report* became the foundation for the Goals expressed in various Elements of this *Comprehensive Plan*—Housing, Economic Vitality, Infrastructure & Public Safety, Health & Sustainability, Humanitarian & Social Aspects, Town & Gown, and Community Identity & Public Places. Together, these elements call for a Town of Normal that, in 2040, is:

Complete ...

- With **neighborhoods** that provide a variety of housing choices, at various price points, to welcome residents of all backgrounds.
- With **streets** that support healthy and active lifestyles by promoting walking, biking and transit. Street vistas will capitalize on building design, scale, architecture, and proportionality to create interesting visual experiences and make every place unique and enjoyable.
- With vibrant and thriving **centers** of all sizes that serve as neighborhood destinations and employment nodes.

Connected ...

- **Physically**, with neighborhoods connected to each other and to centers, providing convenient access to grocery stores, quality public schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas. An interconnected network of streets, sidewalks, and trails will make walking, biking and access to transit easy for all people.
- **Socially**, with gathering places—like streets, parks, front porches, coffee shops, ice cream parlors—that create informal opportunities to meet, get together, and socialize with neighbors.
- **Technologically**, with connected urban systems that deliver services more efficiently to the Town's neighborhoods and centers. Ubiquitous access to high speed, affordable and secure broadband will empower our residents, businesses, and institutions to thrive in this 21st century economy.

Compact ...

- With **dense development and a mix of uses** that support safe and convenient access to a variety of destinations by any mode of transportation, while contributing positively to fiscal and environmental sustainability.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the geographical framework by which to translate these aspirations into a coherent plan for the Town's future land use, using smart growth and the place-based approach in Uptown Normal as models.

A New Approach: **The Planning Framework**

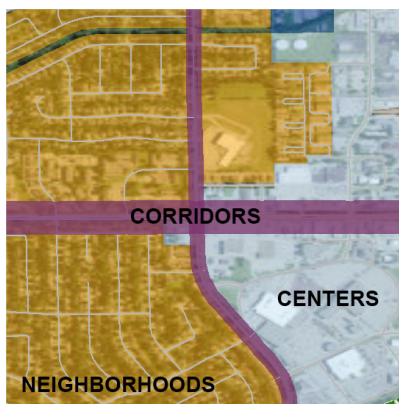
The new Planning Framework represents a slightly different approach to land use planning from past comprehensive plans. Past plans divided up the Town's land by type of use, in which each piece of land was designated with a particular category of use based on existing conditions and projections of what might happen there in the future. The focus was primarily on future growth rather than on existing neighborhoods. Over time, it has become apparent that these methods of land use planning were not adequately facilitating dense, walkable, mixed-use development, taking into account market feasibility, or promoting innovation.

The new Planning Framework will inspire more desirable development outcomes by more clearly defining the ways in which different types of places benefit from different types of land use, laying the conceptual groundwork for context-specific development that advances the Town's overall vision and goals in existing and new developments alike. It sets clear expectations of outcomes in each of several place types, while remaining flexible enough to encourage developers to find innovative ways to achieve those goals as conditions and best practices change.

Because this planning process marks the first time the Town is taking this approach, the following sections will provide context for the new land use plan by establishing its core aspirations and defining Neighborhoods, Centers, Corridors, and their associated Place Types.

Defining the Planning Framework

At a high level, the Planning Framework describes the physical places that make up the Town today and in the future, maps the layout of those places, and provides guidance for their growth and evolution. These places are broadly grouped into three general



Normal's Neighborhoods, Centers, and Corridors will each be unique places while contributing to the whole in creating a complete, connected, and compact community.

categories or elements—Neighborhoods, Centers, and Corridors—and then further broken down into Place Types that aid further in analysis and planning. Each place has unique characteristics, needs, and assets that are important considerations for future planning and development decisions. This system is by nature too broad to consider the unique circumstances of each individual place; however, it can identify common threads within Place Types and provide a more intuitive, flexible rubric by which to shape future development. This will not only help guide policy; but also help developers and the general public gain a better understanding of the reasoning behind policy decisions. Each element of the Framework is described below, along with definitions of its constituent Place Types.

Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are the basic social units where residents live, interact with neighbors, and conduct their most frequent daily activities. The time periods in which these neighborhoods were built, and the regulations at those times, influenced their development patterns, housing styles, affordability and many other key characteristics. Hence, they are grouped here by age of development.

Neighborhood Place Types

Old Neighborhoods (built prior to 1950): These neighborhoods contain all three of Normal's historic districts and other older homes. Because most of Normal's population growth occurred after 1950, there are relatively few of these neighborhoods.

Examples: Old North Normal, Cedar Crest

Early Suburban Neighborhoods (1950–1979): The Early Suburban Neighborhoods were built during the Town's first population boom, in which the population grew from a little under 10,000 in 1950 to nearly 36,000 in 1980. Due to the population explosion of this period, there are roughly four times as many housing units in these neighborhoods as in the Old Neighborhoods.

Examples: Pleasant Hills, Windsor Village

Newer Suburban Neighborhoods (1980 to present): These neighborhoods are mostly located on the fringes of Town, in several cases separated from the core by Veterans Parkway and other arterial roads. They account for roughly the same number of housing units as the Early Suburban Neighborhoods. The Newer Suburban Neighborhoods are more "suburban-style" than the Early Suburban Neighborhoods.

Examples: Ironwood Subdivision, The Vineyards

University Influence Neighborhoods (UIN)

- **UIN 1:** Student-oriented, predominantly residential neighborhoods around ISU.
- **UIN 2:** Single-family neighborhoods around ISU experiencing pressures related to nearby student housing.

These neighborhoods are discussed extensively in the Town and Gown Chapter.

Emerging/Future Neighborhoods: These are the neighborhoods that will be built after adoption of this *Plan*. Many could be integrated into the fabric of New Suburban Neighborhoods to make them more complete, connected, and compact.

Centers

Centers are hubs of commercial, educational, recreational, and institutional activity. They are categorized here by size and function.

Center Place Types

Neighborhood Centers are the smallest-scale centers, primarily serving a few neighborhoods (or even just one) at a time, rather than the entire community. At time of writing, Normal has few such centers due to decades of single-use, auto-oriented development.

Examples: Grocery stores/small shopping centers at Cottage and Hovey and at Raab and Main

Local Centers are mid-sized centers that serve the entire BN community, but generally do not attract many external visitors.

Examples: Civic and cultural centers (e.g., Connie Link Amphitheatre); mid-sized retail and entertainment areas (e.g., Main Street commercial strips); community parks (e.g., One Normal Plaza)

Regional Centers have an impact that reaches beyond the Bloomington-Normal metro area—major retail centers, regional employers, major educational institutions, hospitals, etc.

Examples: Major retail clusters (e.g., retail area along Veterans Parkway); regional employment centers (e.g., Mitsubishi/Rivian area); major educational institutions (e.g., Illinois State University); hospitals (e.g., Advocate BroMenn)

Town Center (Uptown): Given its commercial, institutional, and cultural significance to the Town of Normal, Uptown Normal could be classified as a regional center. It is categorized separately here because of its unique status as the Town's central business district.

Corridors

Corridors are the pathways connecting our people, places, and natural areas. They serve a variety of purposes. This Framework focuses on Transportation, Cultural, and Natural Corridors.

Corridor Place Types

Transportation Corridors are the streets, roads, and railroads that physically connect our centers and neighborhoods.

Cultural Corridors are historically and culturally significant pathways, embodied in Normal primarily by Route 66 and the Constitution Trail.

Natural Corridors are the streams, riparian buffers, detention basins, and other natural or quasi-natural areas that serve as wildlife habitats and pathways.

Examples of Conservation Zones: Sugar Creek Riparian Buffer, detention areas, parks with natural areas hospitable to wildlife (e.g., Fransen Park, Hidden Creek Nature Area)

Quantifying Place Types

The purpose of the Planning Framework is to make Normal’s neighborhoods, centers, and corridors more *complete, connected, and compact*. The tables below contain a number of indicators that can help quantify progress toward those goals.

While it may be obvious, it is worth noting here that these metrics should not be expected to tell the entire story. Abstract concepts like “complete,” “connected,” and “compact” are inherently qualitative and cannot be completely quantified. However, these metrics can help establish some real-world context for how these concepts relate to land use planning, and are a way to check qualitative interpretations against reality.

METRICS

Expectations to Fulfill the Vision	Measurements	
<p>Complete . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing choices, at various price points, to welcome residents of all backgrounds. ■ With streets that support healthy and active lifestyles by promoting walking, biking, and transit. Street vistas will capitalize on building design, scale, architecture, and proportionality to create interesting visual experiences and make every place unique and enjoyable. ■ With vibrant and thriving centers of all sizes that serve as neighborhood destinations and employment nodes. 	<p>Neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Housing Type Diversity Index ■ % Owner-Occupied ■ Average Home Values ■ % homes with senior exemptions ■ % one-story homes ■ Nursing homes/assisted living ■ #Section 8 housing ■ #Supportive housing 	<p>Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % area as underutilized commercial land ■ % area as vacant non-residential land <p>Corridors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Miles of creek with protected riparian buffer ■ Miles of creek with concrete beds by ownership ■ % of streets with sidewalks on at least one side ■ Miles of complete streets
<p>Connected . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Physically, with neighborhoods connected to each other and to centers, providing convenient access to grocery stores, quality public schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas. An interconnected network of streets, sidewalks, and trails will make walking, biking, and access to transit easy for all people. ■ Socially, with gathering places—like streets, parks, front porches, coffee shops, ice cream parlors—that create informal opportunities to meet, get together, and socialize with neighbors. ■ Technologically, with connected urban systems that deliver services more efficiently to the Town’s neighborhoods and centers. Ubiquitous access to high speed, affordable, and secure broadband will empower our residents, businesses, and institutions to thrive in this 21st century economy. 	<p>Neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Link to Node Ratio: 1-2.5 ■ % streets with sidewalks ■ % access to parks ■ % assigned to the nearest school ■ % access to transit ■ % access to trail ■ % access to grocery ■ % access to pharmacy 	<p>Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Walk score ■ Transit score <p>Corridors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % schools with direct trail access ■ % parks with direct trail access ■ Miles of on-street bike lanes ■ Linear miles of sidewalks ■ Bike and pedestrian crashes
<p>Compact . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With dense development and a mix of uses that support safe and convenient access to a variety of destinations by any mode of transportation, while contributing positively to fiscal and environmental sustainability. 	<p>Neighborhoods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Housing density 	<p>Centers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ % area as parking lots

Metrics Reference

Metric	Definition
Residential Housing Units	The total number of all residential units. A “residential unit” is defined as either a single-family residence (attached or detached), a multi-family unit (i.e., an apartment), or a mobile home. Group quarters (e.g., dormitories, group homes, nursing homes, shelters, correctional facilities, etc.) are not included.
Density (Units/Acre)	“Residential Housing Units” divided by the area. <i>Note: Vacant residential parcels as well as the Ironwood Golf Course have been excluded from the area calculation in order to minimize misrepresentation.</i>
Housing Type Diversity Index	The percent chance that two randomly selected residential housing units will be of different types. There are ten possible housing types: Single Family 1–2 bedroom, Single Family 3 bedroom, Single Family 4+ bedroom, Duplex, Condo, Townhouse/Rowhouse, Mobile Home, Apartment 3–10 units, Apartment 11+ units, and Mixed Use. Scores range from 0–100%, with higher percentages signaling greater diversity in available housing types. <i>Note: Ideally, square footage data would have been used to differentiate between single-family housing types; however, this data was not uniformly available and accurate.</i>
% Owner-Occupied	The percentage of residential housing units that are owned by their tenants.
Special-Needs Units	The number of housing units classified as “Supportive Housing” or “Social Services.” These units are not included in the count of residential housing units.
Nursing Home/Assisted Living Units	The number of housing units classified as “Nursing Home/Assisted Living.” These units are not included in the count of residential housing units.
Section 8 Units	The number of residential housing units enrolled in the Section 8 assistance program. This metric serves as a proxy for measuring housing affordability and inclusiveness.
% Senior Exemptions	The percentage of residential housing units with registered senior exemptions. This metric is a proxy for determining aging in place and inclusiveness.
% One-Story Unit Homes	The percentage of residential housing units that are only one story. While not all one story units are built to be accessible, they can be remodeled to better address accessibility issues. This metric serves as another proxy for aging in place and inclusiveness. <i>Note: This does not account for the ground floor of multi-family housing greater than 1 story.</i>
Link-Node Ratio	A measure of the connectivity of the street network; links are street segments, nodes are intersections, and dead ends. Scores are computed by dividing links by nodes and range from 1.0-2.5, with higher values representing better connectivity. A score of 2.5 represents a perfect grid system where every street is connected with no dead-ends.
Single-Family Detached Average Market Value	Average market value of Single Family Detached units, if available. Recorded sales occurred between 2004 and 2014. Values of “N/A” indicate no available data while values of “Insufficient Data” indicate fewer than ten sales occurred. <i>Note: Single Family Detached market values were used due to their greater availability. The available data for Duplex and Townhouse/Rowhouse units suggest that they have average market values slightly lower than that of Single Family Detached units.</i>
% Streets with Sidewalks	The percentage of street segments with sidewalks on at least one side.

Metrics Reference

% Transit Access	The percentage of housing units within 0.25 miles of a transit stop that receives service every 30 minutes or less.
% Trail Access	The percentage of housing units within 0.25 miles of a paved entrance to Constitution Trail. <i>Note: This does not account for parcels abutting the Trail that may have private entrances. Because of this, the analysis misses a total of 72 units that abut the Trail.</i>
% Park Access	The percentage of housing units within 0.25 miles of a public park.
% School Access	The percentage of housing units within 1 mile of any elementary school.
% Assigned School Access	The percentage of housing units within 1 mile of their assigned elementary school.
% Grocery Access	The percentage of housing units within 0.25 miles of a full-service grocery store.
% Pharmacy Access	The percentage of housing units within 0.25 miles of a pharmacy.
% Acres of Parking	Total acres of surface parking lots, as a percentage of total acres.
% Acres of Underutilized Commercial Land	Total acres of underutilized commercial land, as a percentage of total acres.
% Acres of Vacant Land Zoned Non-Residential	Total acres of vacant land zoned for non-residential uses, as a percentage of the total acres.
Walk Score	As calculated by walkscore.com, a measurement of the walkability of an area. Scores range from 0-100, with higher scores indicating greater walkability.
Transit Score	As calculated by walkscore.com, a measurement the viability of transit is for transportation in an area. Scores range from 0-100, with higher scores indicating greater transit coverage and frequency.
Crashes	Total crashes recorded by IDOT, measured over the most recent ten years of data available. Crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists are highlighted separately.
Miles of Sidewalk	The cumulative length of all sidewalks in Normal.
Miles of Bike Lanes	The cumulative length of all bike lanes in Normal.
Miles of Complete Streets	Total miles.
Miles of Potential Complete Streets	Total miles of street segments that are not yet complete streets but should be.
% Parks with Direct Trail Access	The percentage of parks in Normal that are directly along the path of the Constitution Trail.
% Schools with Direct Trail Access	The percentage of public schools in Normal that are directly along the path of the Constitution Trail.

Note: All access measures include residential housing, group quarters, special-needs housing, and nursing home/assisted living housing. All access scores use network distance and not “as the crow flies” distance. Access scores do not take into account barriers such as high traffic areas.



NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods are the fundamental social units of a community. They are more than simple collections of homes. They are where people live, raise their families, and spend most of their free time. A neighborhood’s physical characteristics, aesthetics, level of security, and sense of community all have a major influence on its residents’ quality of life.



This chapter evaluates Normal’s residential neighborhoods to determine the extent to which they are positioned to help the Town become more complete, connected, and compact. This is not an abstract question, but has real consequences for how residents experience this community. Do their neighborhoods provide affordable and diverse housing options? Are they attractive and desirable places to live? Do they provide a safe, welcoming public realm—the streets, sidewalks, and public places that tie a neighborhood together—that encourages people to get to know their neighbors and fosters an active lifestyle? Do they provide adequate access to employment, retail, education, and other centers? Are they casualties of (or contributors to) urban sprawl, or are they dense and close enough to the core to take advantage of urban amenities and infrastructure? This analysis attempts to answer these questions and, with those answers in mind, provide recommendations to guide future development and redevelopment.

The focus is on three neighborhood types: Old Neighborhoods, Early Suburban Neighborhoods, and New Suburban/Future Neighborhoods. The neighborhoods discussed here account for most of but not all housing units in the Town of Normal. *[See Town & Gown element for more information on the Univeristy Influence Neighborhoods.]*



Old Neighborhoods

F1.3



**Early Suburban
Neighborhoods**

F1.12



**New/Future
Neighborhoods**

F1.19

In general, the Old Neighborhoods are in the best position to meet the Complete/Connected/Compact criteria due to their central location, street design, historic architecture, and access to trails, and other community facilities.

The Early Suburban Neighborhoods - those developed during the first three decades of the Town's postwar population expansion and trend toward suburbanization—are more similar to than different from the Old Neighborhoods. Most are located fairly close to major centers and destinations, though a few are closer to the fringes. Streets are designed more for cars than pedestrians and bicyclists, limiting both internal connectivity and linkages to other parts of the community. However, they are affordable and appealing to people of a variety of age groups.

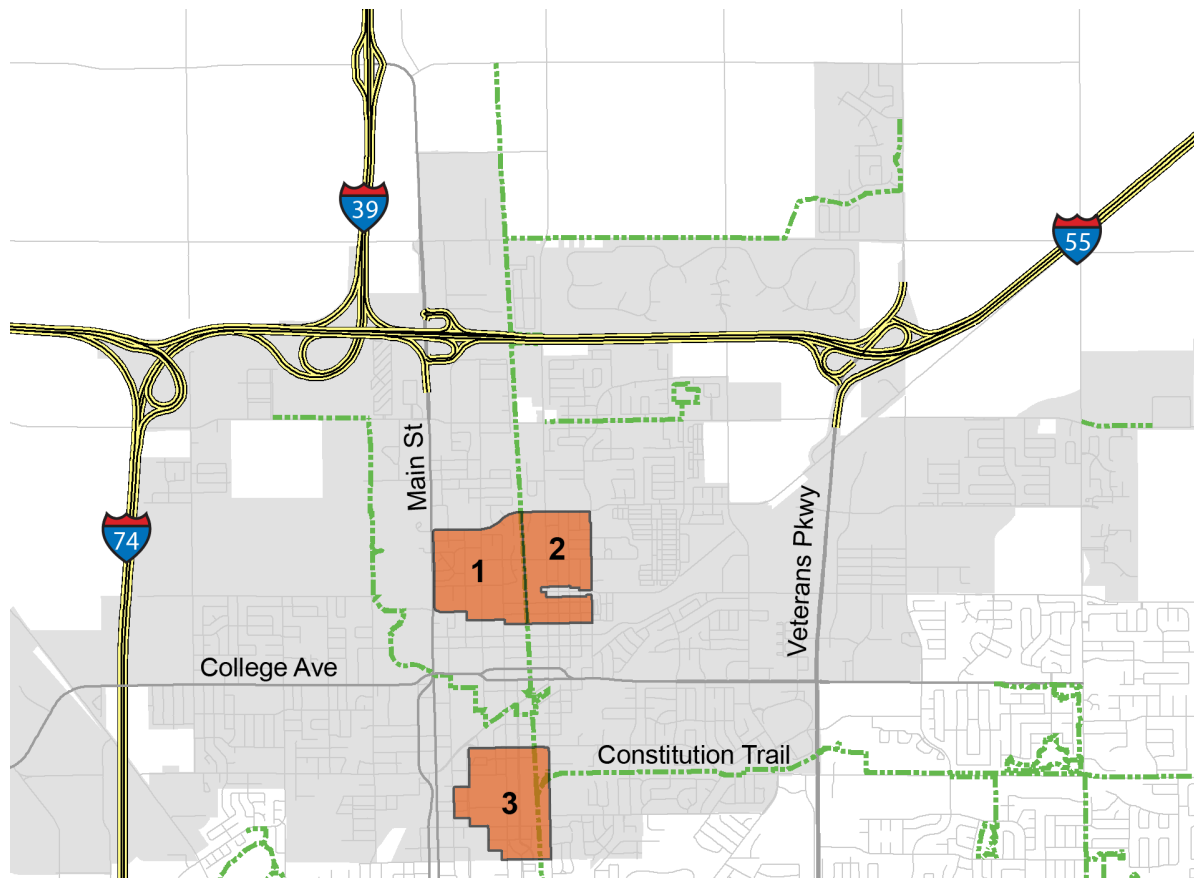
Neither the Old Neighborhoods nor the Early Suburban Neighborhoods are likely to see major changes over the planning period. This chapter provides a structure to shape any future development and redevelopment in these areas, but with the understanding that these neighborhoods are long-established and changes are likely to be gradual, marginal, and opportunistic. The focus should be on preserving the best aspects of these neighborhoods and building on those strengths when opportunities present themselves.

In contrast, the New Suburban and Emerging Neighborhoods are the least well-positioned. Their relative isolation on the edges of the community, including some of the east side of Veterans Parkway, will inherently limit connectivity to the core. Certain established subdivisions with the largest and most expensive homes are also restricted in the extent to which they can provide diverse housing options and attract a broad cross-section of the community. While these constraints are undeniable, there are also significant opportunities for improvement. Many of the parcels in these neighborhoods are vacant, and annexation agreements provide for a good deal of additional development within or adjacent to them. These areas can still be made more Complete by promoting more diverse and well-mixed housing, encouraging the development of the neighborhood centers and placement of neighborhood parks, requiring more walkable and bikeable urban design, and working to establish better connections to the public transit system and the Constitution Trail.

Ultimately, the most critical takeaway from this section is that we can learn from the growth and development history of this community. Future development should be guided by an understanding of what has worked and what has not worked in the past. This section uses these insights to establish a blueprint for more complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods.

OLD NEIGHBORHOODS

MAP FNI: Old Neighborhoods



SUBDIVISIONS AND OTHER IDENTIFIERS

OLD 1: Old North Normal, University Court

OLD 2: Fell Park

OLD 3: Cedar Crest, Payne Place, Highland, Broadway - Fell

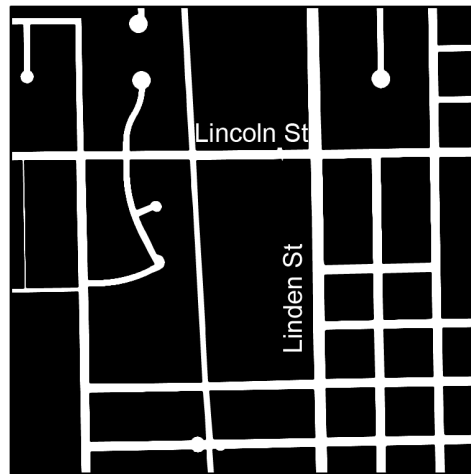
Complete

These neighborhoods, most of them built prior to 1950, account for about 8% of Normal's total housing stock. Normal's three historic districts—Old North Normal, Cedar Crest, and Highland—can all be found within these areas. Homes are generally single-family detached with some small apartment buildings. Housing is affordable for most people, but Section 8 and special-needs housing are limited.

The public realm is one of the Old Neighborhoods' strongest features, with desirable features such as:

- Streets lined with mature trees
- A mix of street types (brick streets interspersed throughout all three; boulevards in the Cedar Crest/Highland area)
- Diverse and in some cases historically significant architecture that creates visual interest and a sense of place. Homes typically have inviting entrances and front porches rather than the more suburban-style protruding garages and driveways.
- The Constitution Trail, which splits the two northern-most neighborhoods and runs along the eastern edge of Cedar Crest/Highland
- The Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary, plus other parks (e.g., Fell Park, One Normal Plaza, and Underwood Park) just outside the neighborhoods' boundaries

In addition, Sugar Creek runs through the Cedar Crest/Highland area.



Connected

Some areas of the Old Neighborhoods were built on a grid, which generally maximizes connectivity for users of all modes of transportation. In many cases the grid was interrupted by the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad; since the railroad has been converted to the Constitution Trail, the disruptive effects of these interruptions have been mitigated to some degree. Areas built after the arrival of the automobile were more likely to include hierarchical street patterns and long blocks that favor cars over other modes of transportation. Good sidewalk coverage (though in some places there are only sidewalks on one side of the street) and the robust tree canopy encourage walking, and the short distances to Uptown, ISU's campus, and the Trail put residents in prime position to take advantage of the Town's commercial, educational, cultural, and recreational assets. Good access to parks and the transit system (with a few exceptions) further bolster connectivity. However, grocery store and pharmacy access are poor, and access by foot to assigned elementary schools is mixed (very high in some areas, low in others), despite the presence of several schools within walking distance of most housing units.

Compact

The proximity to the center of Town is a major plus. However, contrary to popular belief, the neighborhoods themselves are generally not very compact, with large lots (though smaller than in the New Suburban Neighborhoods) and low residential densities.

QUICK FACTS

Predominant Zoning

- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District (all three)
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District (all three)
- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District (a few parcels in Old1 and Old2)
- Historic district overlay zones in Old North Normal, Cedar Crest, and Highland; historic landmarks protected by these overlays include Broadview Mansion, Camelback Bridge, 705 S. Broadway Avenue, 1202 S. Fell Avenue, and 206 W. Lincoln Street

Neighborhood Groups

- Organized: Broadview, Fell Park, North School Street, Payne Place

Community Facilities

- Glenn Elementary School in Old3
- Eugene Field Special Services Center (Unit 5) in Old2
- Christ the King Episcopal Church in Old3
- Community Health Care Clinic in Old3
- Connie Link Amphitheatre adjacent to Old3
- Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary in Old1

In Close Proximity

- Other parks can be found just outside neighborhood boundaries, within walking distance for many neighbors

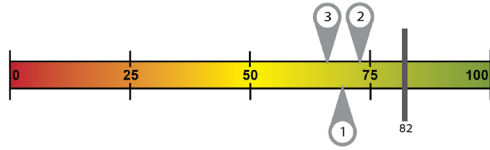


1. Cedar Crest Historic District sign, 2. & 3. Public realm in Normal's Old Neighborhoods, 4. & 5. Historic housing and architecture

Complete and Compact Metrics

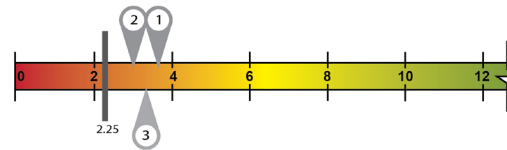
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Housing Type Diversity Index



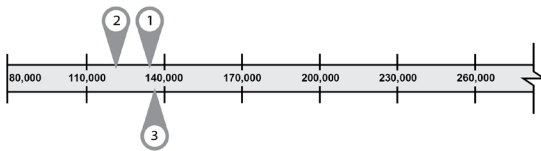
The Old Neighborhoods are among the Town's most diverse neighborhoods in terms of housing types. The majority of units are single-family detached homes of various sizes, with three-bedroom homes accounting for slightly under half of the housing units.

Density (Units/Acre)



The Old Neighborhoods are not as dense in aggregate as some of the Early and New Suburban Areas. This is due to a lower concentration of multifamily and single-family attached housing.

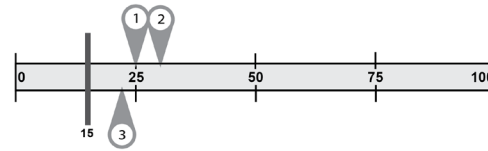
Single-Family Detached Average Market Value



The Old Neighborhoods are among Normal's most affordable, with average home values considerably lower than the Town's median home value of approximately \$162,000 (per the 2011–15 ACS).*

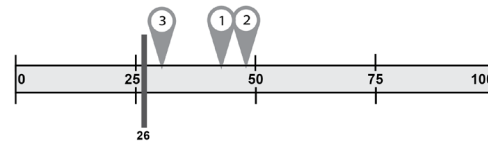
*Median home value and average (mean) are not always equal, but they are generally similar enough to make broad comparisons.

Percentage of Senior Exemptions

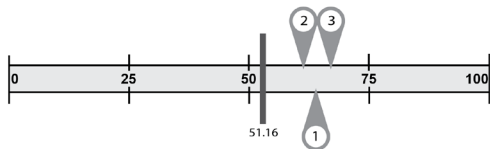


These neighborhoods have a higher-than-average concentration of Senior Exemptions. This indicates that many residents choose to "age in place" here. The relatively high concentration of one-story homes may be one of several factors driving seniors' interest in these neighborhoods (in addition to the proximity to cultural destinations, affordability, and the presence of long-time family residences).

Percent of 1 Story Homes



Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



Most of the homes in these neighborhoods are owner-occupied. This is consistent with the housing types (predominantly single-family detached) available in these areas.

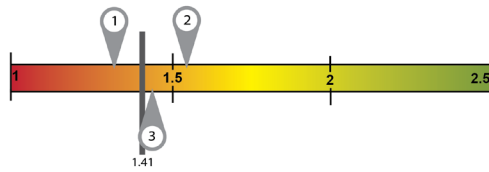
2040 TARGETS

The goal is to **maintain or improve** the Housing Type Diversity Index, Density, Average Market Value of a Single-Family Home, Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Percentage of Senior Exemptions and Percentage of One-Story Homes.

Connected Metrics

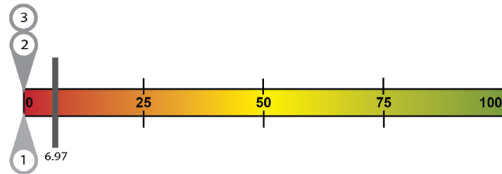
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Link-Node Ratio



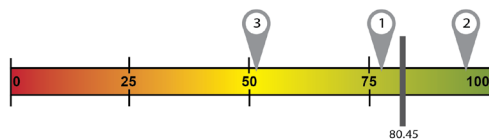
Link-node ratios within the Old Neighborhoods are similar to the Town average. Street patterns run the gamut from perfect grids (mostly in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas), to generally rectilinear but discontinuous patterns, to curvilinear and hierarchical patterns in some of the post-automobile areas. The presence of the Constitution Trail interrupts grid patterns in some areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access



Access to grocery stores and pharmacies is poor by any mode of transportation other than a car, as is the case in most of the Town's residential neighborhoods. The lack of grocery stores and pharmacies is an impediment to the development of neighborhood centers, but being close to Uptown and ISU mitigates this problem somewhat.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access

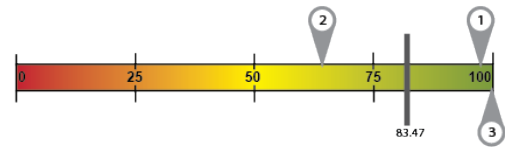


Transit access varies widely, with two neighborhoods (Normal/School and Fell Park areas) scoring well and the third (Cedar Crest/Highland) scoring less well, in keeping with the general theme of the former two neighborhoods providing better multimodal accessibility. There is one transit route running along the edges of Old 3.

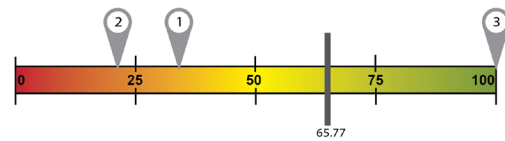
2040 TARGETS

The goal is to **improve** access to transit, the Constitution trail, parks, schools, and grocery stores.

Percentage of 1-Mile Elementary Access

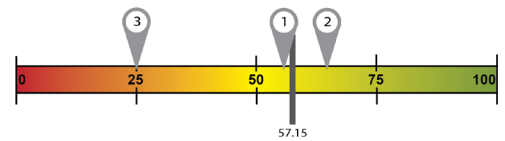


Percentage of 1-Mile Assigned Elementary Access



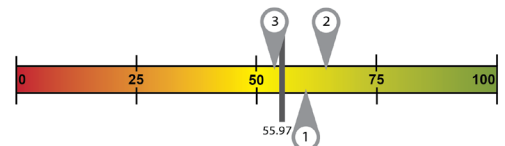
A large majority of residences in the Old Neighborhoods are located within one mile of an elementary school. However, in Old1 and Old2, most students are assigned to schools that are located farther away. Old1 and Old2 may be good candidates for school reassignment.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



Park access is roughly average in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas, but low in Cedar Crest/Highland. Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary is located near Old 1 and Old 2. Old 3 does have access to the Glenn Elementary School park (not reflected in this analysis).

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



The Constitution Trail is the dividing line for two of the three Old Neighborhoods, and runs along the eastern edge of the third. Trail connections are abundant in the Normal/School and Fell Park areas. It is only accessible from Vernon and Virginia in the Cedar Crest/Highland area, limiting access for many residents.

Old Neighborhood Recommendations

1. Protect areas with unique historic or architectural qualities.

The Old Neighborhood boundaries encompass many of Normal's historic neighborhoods, including the three designated Historic Districts—Old North Normal, Highland, and Cedar Crest—and some other scattered historic sites. The external features of historic sites and structures within the designated Historic Districts are protected by ordinance. The Town also uses grant funding (the Dr. Robert G. Bone Grant) to aid historic property owners in restoration and preservation. While the Historic Districts and Bone Grants have proved valuable over the years in protecting historic assets, particularly in the designated areas, there are a number of places in Normal that may benefit from other approaches to historic preservation.

- 1a. The Legacy Report and the South Side Survey are important historic preservation resources for the Town. These resources identify several areas as potential historic districts or structures including the Broadway-Fell Corridor, Payne Place, a few scattered structures in the residential area adjacent to Fell Park, and the “Black Thematic District” [See Map FN2]. The Town should investigate these areas further to evaluate their eligibility for Historic District designation. For areas not suited to becoming Historic Districts, the Town should consider other tools such as Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) or Thematic Districts to protect the character of these areas/structures. NCDs protect broad neighborhood characteristics such as building scale and general design patterns, rather than the specific details of individual structures like exterior materials. Thematic Districts identify properties of similar character or significance to form a historic district whether the properties are adjacent to each other or not.
- 1b. Create a database of historically significant structures. Tie this database to permitting and other applications to ensure the highest level of protection.

2. Preserve existing housing stock.

The housing stock in the Old Neighborhoods is among the most affordable and physically accessible in Normal, two key components that contribute to neighborhood diversity. The Town should create financial and technical programs to assist homeowners wishing to retrofit their homes. Given the high concentration of seniors in this area, any retrofit programs should include accessibility improvements as well.

[See *Housing Element* for more discussion]

3. Maintain infrastructure in good condition.

The infrastructure in the Old Neighborhoods is some of the oldest in the Town. Infrastructure investments in these areas would improve reliability of service, encourage private investment, and increase property values. Infrastructure improvements should include:

- 3a. Updates to water distribution infrastructure to eliminate any potential lead concerns.
- 3b. Improvements to sewer infrastructure to increase efficiency and reduce basement back-ups.
- 3c. Keeping sidewalks in good repair and free of obstacles.

- 3d. Protecting the brick streets that add to the charm and character of these areas.
- 3e. Coordinating with utility companies to move overhead utilities underground. While this move may be challenging, it will reduce interference with natural elements, enhance service predictability, improve aesthetics, and protect the mature tree canopy.

4. Make the Old Neighborhoods Normal's most connected neighborhoods by 2040.

- 4a. Prioritize intersection safety for all modes of transportation, especially near schools, parks, and activity centers.
- 4b. Facilitate the addition of an Uptown grocery store to enhance access to fresh food.
- 4c. Given the high concentration of seniors in the Old Neighborhood 3, and given the proximity of this area to several routes, Town should add this area to the list of places to be further investigated by Connect Transit for route expansion in the future.
- 4d. Old Neighborhood 3 could benefit from additional access points to the Constitution Trail. Town staff should investigate obtaining Trail Easements and creating access along Broadway Terrace or Division Street. Proposed trail extensions along Sugar Creek would also improve trail access for this neighborhood.
- 4e. To improve park access in Old Neighborhood 3, the Town could work with Advocate BroMenn to investigate the possibility of creating a park at the corner of West Virginia Ave and Prospect Ave, where BroMenn recently demolished an old structure.

5. Protect the mature tree canopy and other environmental assets.

Many trees in these areas are over 100 years old and likely won't survive another 100. The Town should have a plan in place to ensure the tree canopy remains healthy and robust. Such a plan should also serve to protect environmental assets like Sugar Creek, Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary, and the Constitution Trail through programming and partnerships. Additionally, medians and boulevards could feature native plant varieties that become pollinator habitats while contributing to the aesthetics of the streets.

6. Provide avenues to celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of these neighborhoods

Programs and events help enhance social interactions and create a sense of place. The Town should engage neighborhood groups and other interested stakeholders to celebrate these unique neighborhoods. This could include historic home walking tours, making block party kits available more readily, and featuring these neighborhoods on the Town's website.

[See Community Identity & Public Places Element.]

Growth Forecast for Old Neighborhoods

These neighborhoods are only expected to grow minimally beyond their current capacity. Future growth, to the extent that it does occur, may be in the form of 1) subdivision of larger residential lots or 2) demolition of existing homes. The Town should anticipate and manage such development appropriately.

The Town should encourage appropriate residential densities, especially close to activity centers, while ensuring that new development is sensitive to neighborhood character and context. Some communities have adopted cottage housing ordinances to achieve this balance. Cottage units have shared amenities and common areas that allows these developments to be denser and less expensive than traditional single-family developments, as well as having unified designs that can be customized to fit the surrounding area.

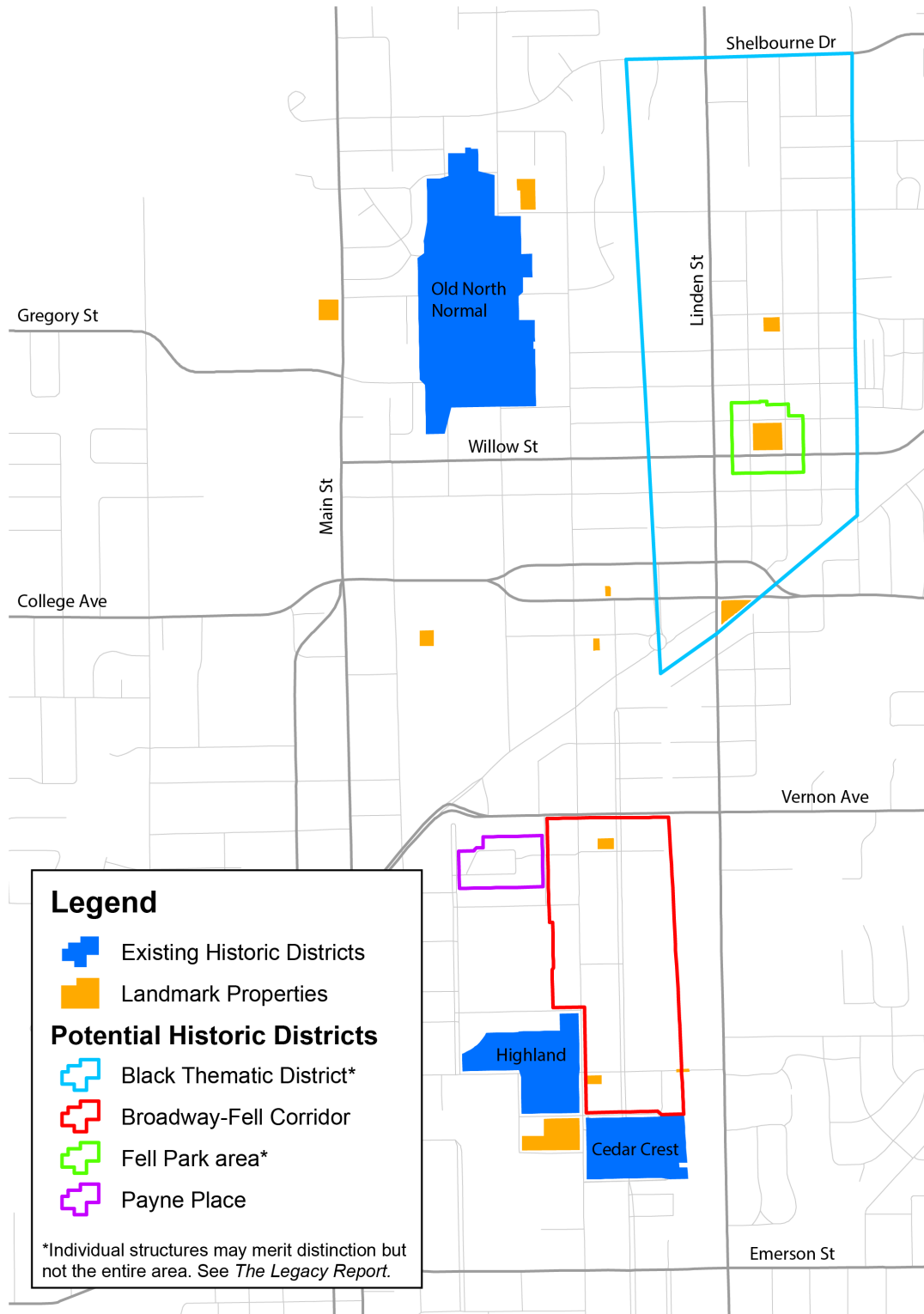
The Town should discourage the demolition of older homes, even if they are not protected by a historic district or other ordinances. Maintaining the existing housing stock is critical to affordable housing options in Normal. The Town should consider providing incentives for restoration. Where restoration is not possible, the Town should encourage deconstruction in place of demolition. This method helps preserve certain architectural elements to be used in other restoration projects.



Cottage Housing Developments in Kirkland, Washington

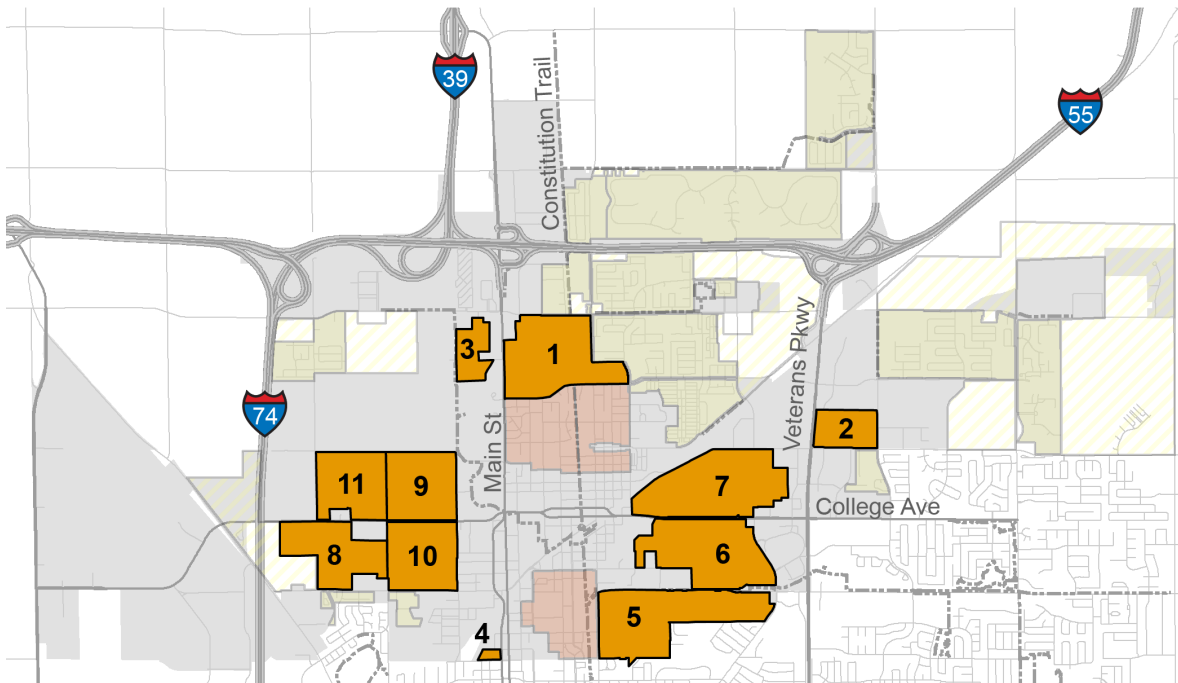
Source: Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

MAP FN2: Existing and Proposed Historic Districts



EARLY SUBURBAN (ES) NEIGHBORHOODS

MAP FN3: Early Suburban Neighborhoods



Subdivisions and Other Identifiers

ES1: Bunker Hill

ES2: Greenbriar

ES3: Fairview/Orlando

ES4: No Identifier

ES5: Maple Wood

ES6: Pleasant Hills

ES7: Windsor Hill/Sugar Creek Elementary

ES8: University Estates, White Oak and Hovey

ES9: Westbrooke

ES10: Kingsridge, Oakdale Elementary School

ES11: Parkside

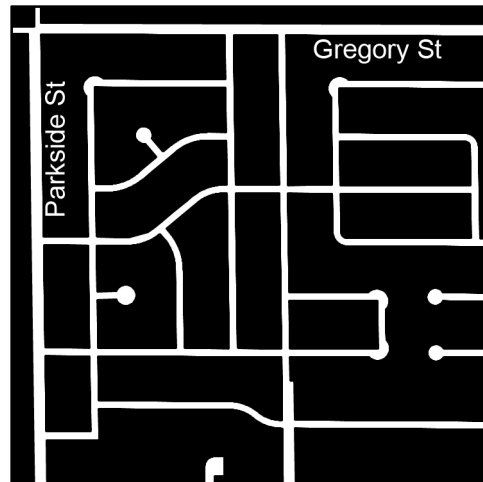
The Early Suburban Neighborhoods, built largely between 1951 and 1980, account for roughly a third of Normal's total housing stock. These neighborhoods represent an intermediate stage between the Old Neighborhood and New Suburban types in their housing stock, street patterns, connectivity, density, and other aspects, though they are closer to the older than the newer neighborhoods in many ways.

Complete

Homes are generally affordable—most homes are sold for less than the Town median for single-family homes. The most common home type is a three-bedroom, single-family detached home (nearly half of all units). There is room for improvement with respect to housing-type diversity. Even neighborhoods with a variety of housing types tend to be formed of discrete clusters—large single-family developments in one area, apartment complexes in another, etc.—rather than mixing different types together. While this is fairly typical, it creates a de facto divide between neighborhoods of different demographic groups.

There are high concentrations of one-story homes and senior exemptions, as well as nursing homes and assisted living units.

In general, the public realm is pleasant, with tree-lined streets and well-maintained homes, but not as rich and diverse as in the historic neighborhoods, due in part to less distinctive architecture.



Connected

Most of the Early Suburban neighborhoods are west of Veterans Parkway, avoiding one of the community's key barriers to connectivity. Some are close enough to Uptown, ISU, and other centers to make them appealing to people—particularly demographic groups such as Millennials and Baby Boomers—who desire proximity to cultural centers. Sidewalk coverage is mostly good, but the street patterns in some areas discourage walking and biking as a primary mode of transportation.

These street patterns also limit transit access, forcing people to walk farther to reach bus stops that are close by “as the crow flies.”

More than two-thirds of the homes in the Early Suburban areas are outside the quarter-mile (5-minute walk) buffer that would indicate ideal access to parks.

As in most parts of Normal, most housing units are not within easy walking distance of a grocery store or pharmacy. Some are close enough but are separated from grocery stores by busy streets and poor pedestrian access. Example: ES2, the Greenbriar area. Others are simply not close enough to centers where grocery stores and pharmacies exist or may exist in the future.

Elementary school access, on the other hand, is excellent, as roughly 86% of housing units are located within one mile of their assigned elementary school, making them particularly attractive for young families with children. This allows many students to walk or bike to school and makes the Early Suburban Neighborhoods good candidates for neighborhood school programs in which schools serve as multipurpose community facilities.

Compact

As would be expected given their high proportion of single-family homes, most of these neighborhoods are fairly low-density, with the exception of a few with large numbers of multifamily units (particularly Greenbriar and Fairview/Orlando).

QUICK FACTS

Predominant Zoning

- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District
- R-2 Mixed-Residence District
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District
- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District

Neighborhood Groups

- Bunker Hill (ES1)
- Greenbriar (ES2)
- Windsor Hill (ES7)

Community Facilities

- Oakdale Elementary School (ES10)
- ISU facilities (ES9)
- Churches (ES1, ES5, ES7, ES9)
- Fire Department (ES7)
- Fairview Elementary School (ES1)
- Sugar Creek Elementary School (ES7)
- Rosa Parks Commons (ES1)
- Martin Luther King Park (ES7)
- Underwood Park (ES5)
- Calvary Acres Recreation Area (ES1)
- Constitution Trail (ES1, ES5)

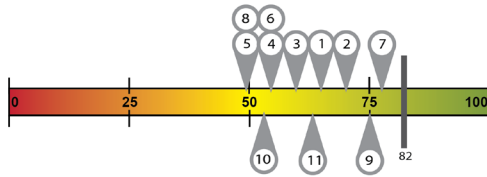
In Close Proximity

- Anderson Park
- Ewing Park
- Maxwell Park
- Champion Fields
- Shepard Park

Complete and Compact Metrics

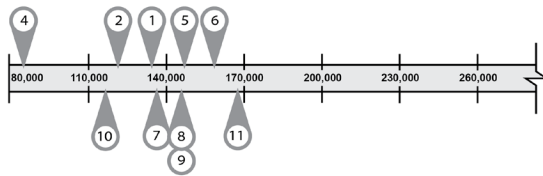
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Housing Type Diversity Index



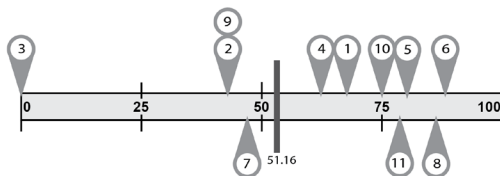
Housing type diversity is difficult to characterize in aggregate, as there is a wide and fairly even distribution in the Index scores. The Windsor Hill (ES7) and Westbrook (ES9) areas have the highest Housing Type Diversity Indices of all the neighborhoods in this analysis. Underwood/Ewing (ES5), the Pleasant Hills area (ES6), Parkside South (ES8) and the Oakdale Heights area (ES10) are among the least diverse.

Single-Family Detached Average Market Value



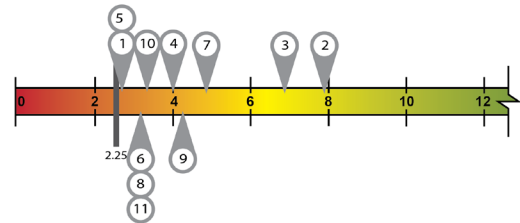
A majority of the single-family homes tend to be relatively affordable, with average market values below the Town-wide median of approximately \$162,000.

Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



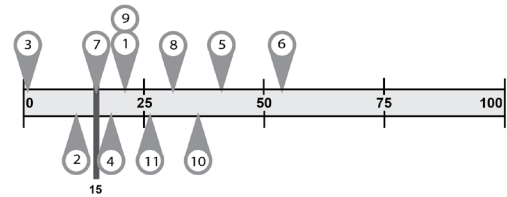
Most of the housing units are owner-occupied, with a few being much more oriented toward renters. Rental units tend to come in pockets of apartment complexes rather than being evenly mixed with single-family units.

Density (Units/Acre)

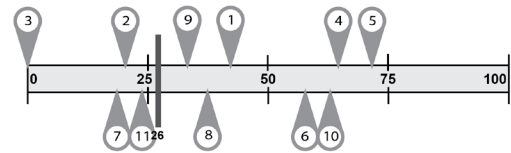


Most of these neighborhoods are dominated by single-family detached homes and have low residential densities, except ES2 and ES3 that house apartment complexes.

Percentage of Senior Exemptions



Percent of One-Story Homes



The Early Suburban Neighborhoods have a high concentration of both Senior Exemptions and one-story homes. Over 37% of the housing units in these neighborhoods are one-story homes. Census data suggest that the Early Suburban Neighborhoods have the highest concentrations of seniors in Normal, possibly reflecting home designs as well as affordability and reasonable proximity to activity centers.

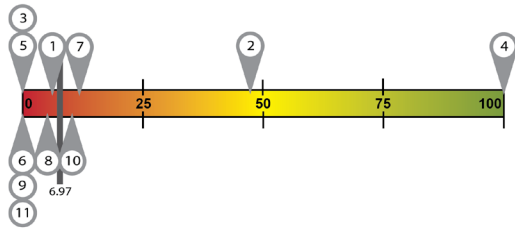
2040 TARGETS

The goal is to maintain or improve Housing Type Diversity Index, Density, Average Market Value of a Single-Family Home, Percentage of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, Percentage of Senior Exemptions, and Percentage of One-Story Homes.

Connected Metrics

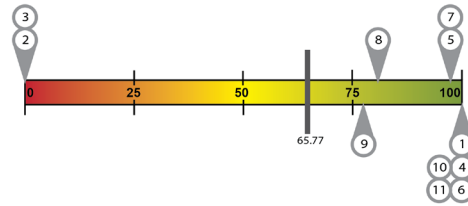
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access



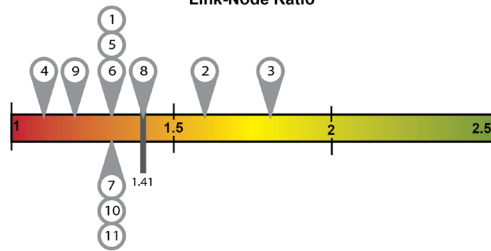
With a couple of exceptions, these neighborhoods are lacking in grocery and pharmacy access as the rest of the Town's residential areas. Note: ES4, near the Kroger on S. Main St., only has 28 units within the Town of Normal; if this analysis extended into the City of Bloomington, it would likely be part of a larger neighborhood.

Percentage of 1-Mile Assigned Elementary Access



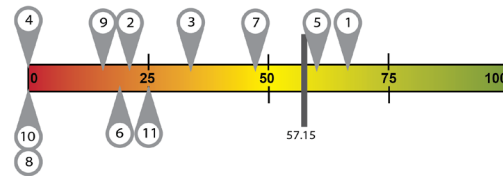
Most housing units in this area are assigned to elementary schools within one mile. While other factors determine accessibility, residents in these areas are much more likely to have accessible neighborhood schools than residents of the Town as a whole.

Link-Node Ratio



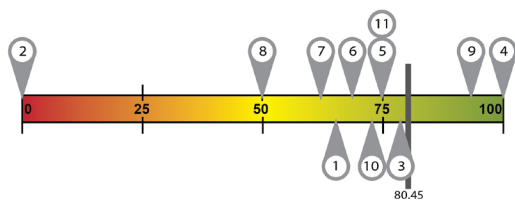
Street patterns tend to limit connectivity. Whereas low link-node ratios in the Old Neighborhoods are often the result of the Constitution Trail interrupting the street grid, in the Early Suburban Neighborhoods streets were intentionally designed with cul-de-sacs, loops, and other discontinuous patterns that hamper multimodal transportation.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



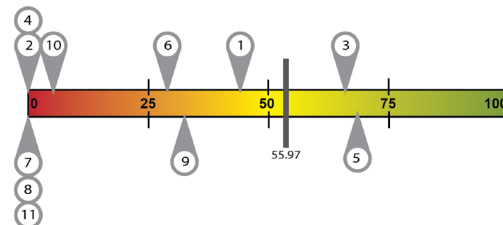
Most housing units are more than a quarter of a mile away from the nearest park.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access



Most units have access to at least one regular (every half-hour) transit route, though there is some room for improvement in some areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



Only a few of the Early Suburban Neighborhoods are located within a quarter-mile of an access point to the Constitution Trail. Planned expansions to the Trail network are expected to benefit these areas.

2040 TARGETS

The goal is to improve access to transit, the Constitution trail, parks, and grocery stores; Access (by walking) to assigned elementary schools should be maintained at the same levels or improved as opportunities present themselves.

Early Suburban Recommendations

1. Promote and support these neighborhoods as mixed-age and mixed-income neighborhoods.

As outlined in the Demographics and Projections chapter of the Community Snapshot and Outreach Report, Normal's non-student population is aging. The metrics presented earlier in this section indicate that the Early Suburban neighborhoods house a significant portion of Normal's aging population. Given their overall affordability and access to good schools, these neighborhoods are also attracting families with young children. In other words, the Early Suburban neighborhoods are naturally emerging as mixed-age and mixed-income neighborhoods. The Town should continue to pursue opportunities to position them as such.

2. Preserve the affordability and the diversity of housing for all residents, particularly for seniors.

These neighborhoods have a number of one-story homes owned by seniors. For aging homeowners on fixed incomes, regular maintenance and upkeep of a home can become physically difficult to manage, as well as financially stressful. The Town, in partnership with various organizations, should offer supportive services to help seniors age in their homes.

- 2a. Review and revise regulations to ensure that development policies are senior-friendly. For example, permitting accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in certain neighborhoods, or allowing shared-housing programs that allow more than two unrelated individuals to live in the same house, may provide the help seniors need to continue living in their homes.
- 2b. Develop rehabilitation programs that allow residents to improve their homes, including making them more physically accessible
- 2c. Partner with Normal Township or other not-for-profit organizations to help seniors with minor home repairs and maintenance.
- 2d. Partner with Connect Transit, YWCA, or other not-for-profit organizations to increase door-to-door and door-through-door transportation services to access medical and other services. The availability of this service determines some seniors' ability to live in their homes.

[See Housing Element for more discussion on this subject.]

3. Enhance Safe Routes to School efforts.

Early Suburban neighborhoods are among the few areas where a significant portion of the households are within a mile of their assigned elementary schools.

- 3a. Partner with Unit 5 to increase the number of walkers and bikers to Oakdale, Fairview, Colene Hoose, and Sugar Creek Elementary schools, and Chiddix Middle school. Focus efforts on strategic infrastructure improvements to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as programming such as Safe Routes to School.
- 3b. Prioritize trail improvements that improve connections to schools and parks.

[See Health & Sustainability Element for more discussion on this subject]

4. Make public places universally accessible.

- 4a. Audit Anderson Park, Fairview Park, Rosa Park Commons, Martin Luther King Park, and Underwood park for universal accessibility. Evaluate spaces and their suitability for both seniors and children. For example, passive spaces may be more appealing to seniors, while active spaces suit children. Select at least one park, preferably one close to a high concentration of senior residents, to pilot universal design solutions in particular.

[See Community Identity & Public Places Element for more discussion on this subject]

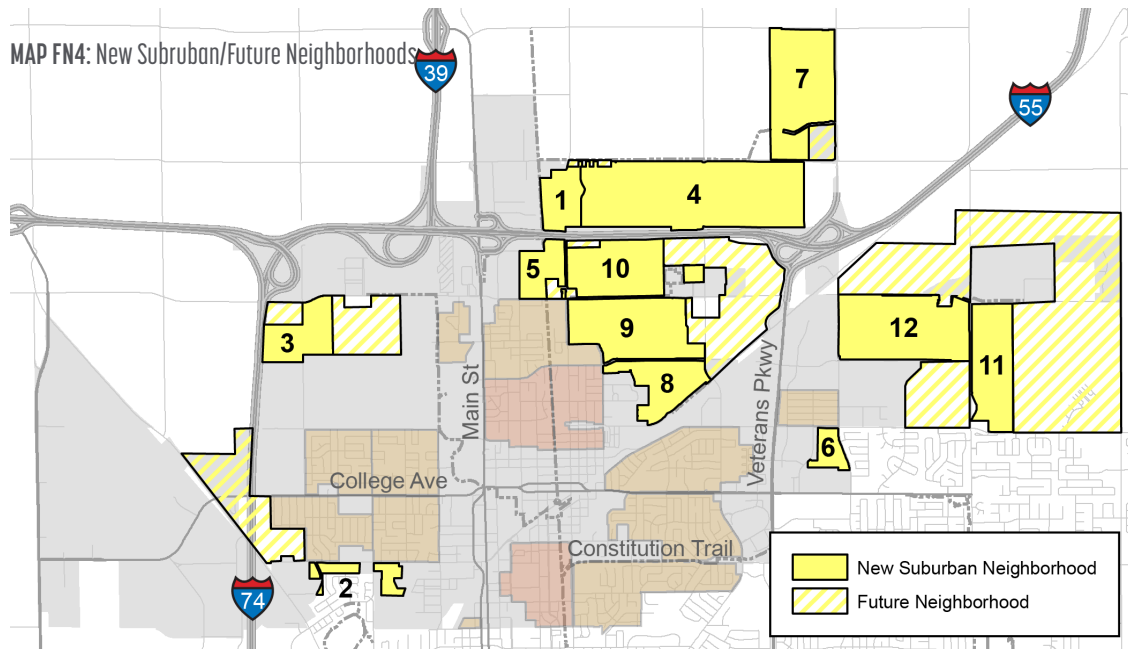
Growth Forecast for Early Suburban Neighborhoods

These neighborhoods are only expected to grow minimally beyond their current capacity. Future growth, to the extent that it does occur, may be in the form of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). The Town's Zoning Code currently does not allow ADUs and should be amended to accommodate them. Note that the magnitude of the need for ADUs has not been established as part of this comprehensive plan.

Population densities in these neighborhoods can also increase if shared housing options are allowed or encouraged.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a term applied to an additional living space on a single family lot. ADU's can be internal, attached or detached from the principal building. These dwelling units can help bring multiple generations together, help people age in place, create affordability for the homeowner, and provide affordable rental options.

NEW SUBURBAN(NS)/FUTURE NEIGHBORHOODS



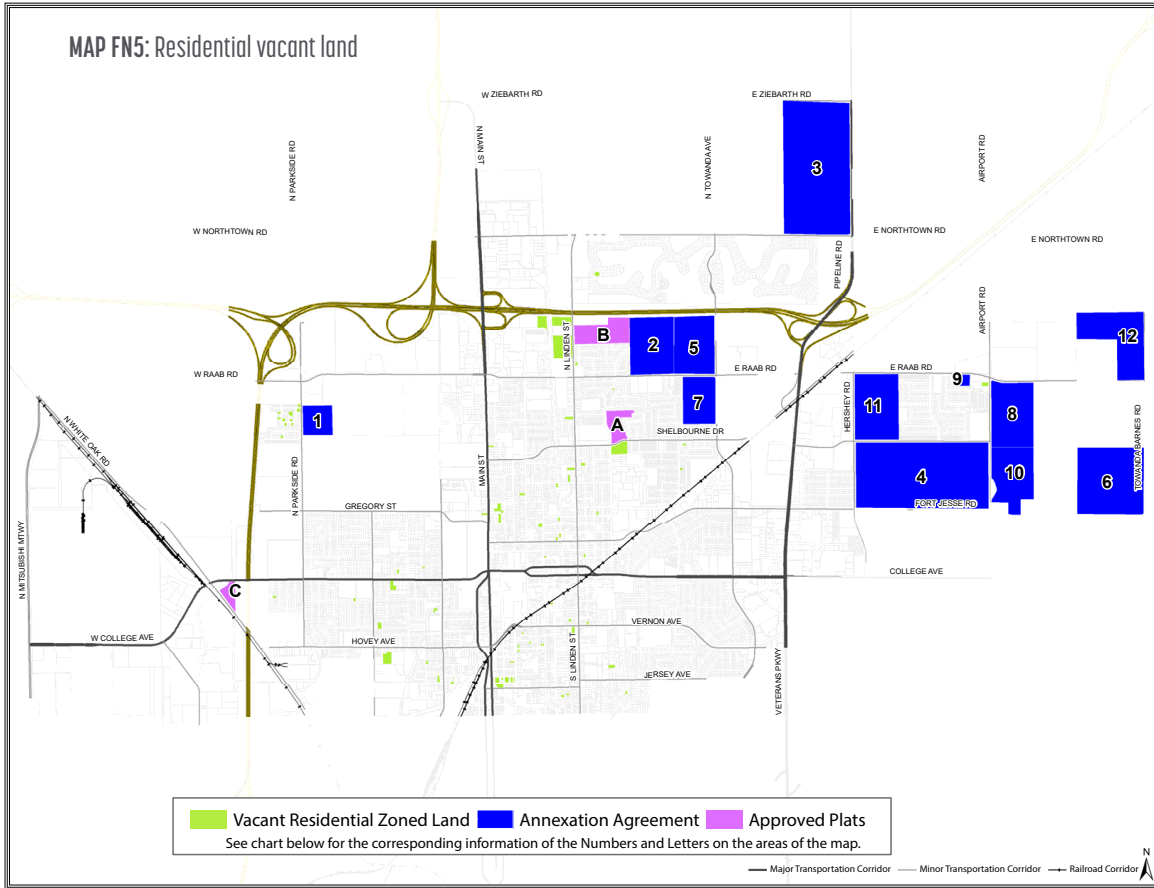
Subdivisions and Other Identifiers

- NS 1: Landings Estates
- NS 2: No Identifier
- NS 3: Highland Village Apartments
- NS 4: Ironwood Golf Course
- NS 5: Briarwood and Lincoln Square Apartments
- NS 6: Residential area behind Meijers
- NS 7: North Bridge

- NS 8: Savannah Green
- NS 9: Collie Ridge, Carriage Hills, Pinehurst and Kelley Glen
- NS 10: Pheasant Ridge
- NS 11: Vineyards, Trails on Sunset Lake
- NS 12: Eagles Landing, Grove Elementary School

The neighborhoods developed in Normal since 1980 represent the culmination of the trend described in the introduction to the Planning Framework. Located at the edges of town, they are internally homogeneous in their aesthetics and housing options, lack support for multimodal transportation, and are not well connected to the rest of the community; they can be more accurately described as discrete subdivisions than neighborhoods.

Several of the New Suburban Neighborhoods have a good deal of vacant land that has not been developed, some of which is subject to annexation agreements. It is likely that some of Normal's future neighborhoods will be extensions of these New Suburban Neighborhoods. Given that reality, there is still significant potential for these areas to become more complete, connected, and compact.



Annexation Agreements					Approved Plats & Vacant Lots		
ID	Development	Potential #'s on un-annexed property	Potential #'s on annexed property	Exp Date	ID	Development	Potential #'s
1	Greystone Subdivision		144		A	Collie Ridge	80
2	Wintergreen		146	2016	B	Pheasant Ridge	79
3	North Bridge		711	2019	C	Prairie Garden	36
4	Fort Jesse Office Complex/ Country Acres	958		2020		Dispersed vacant lots	300
5	Carden Park	213	51	2020	Total	495	
6	Franklin Heights	426		2021			
7	Kelley Glen	150	39	2022			
8	Vineyards		140	2024			
9	Taylor	36		2024			
10	Trails on Sunset Lake		176	2027			
11	Blackstone Trails		265	2029			
12	Apostolic Christian Church		148	2029			
	Totals	1,357	1,820				

Source: Community Outreach and Snapshot report published on April 2016 as part of this Comprehensive Planning Process

Complete

One of the major conclusions of the BN Home Regional Housing Study [See the *Housing Element for more information*] was that recent housing development has been slanted disproportionately toward large and expensive single-family detached homes. This is easily visible in the housing stock of the New Suburban Neighborhoods. Nearly a third of housing units are single-family detached homes with at least four bedrooms. Affordable housing is limited. Single-family homes, in particular, are generally expensive compared to the Town median. Supportive housing is lacking, as are one-story homes. Based on the low percentages of senior exemptions and one-story homes, these neighborhoods appear to be relatively unattractive to older residents.

Housing diversity is another area where the impact of these development patterns can be seen. Different housing types are not generally mixed together within neighborhoods, but found within separate clusters. Housing tenancies are similarly geographically stratified. In some neighborhoods, nearly 100% of units are owner-occupied, and most of these are large, single-family detached houses; a few areas are mostly renter-occupied, due to the presence of large apartment complexes.

The public realm is an underutilized asset in the New Suburban Neighborhoods. A complete neighborhood should have attractive street vistas with varied architecture and urban design, integration with vibrant public places, a robust tree canopy, and other features that make it unique and enjoyable. Such elements are generally lacking in the New Suburban Neighborhoods and do not foster this kind of vibrant public realm. Allowances must be made for the fact that these neighborhoods are relatively new (explaining at least some of the lack of tree coverage) and, in some cases, incomplete.

QUICK FACTS

Predominant Zoning

- R-1A Low-Density Single-Family District
- R-1B Medium-Density Single-Family District
- R-2 Mixed-Residence District
- R-3A Medium-Density Multiple-Family District
- Churches (NS6, NS7, NS11)
- Vacant Land (NS2, NS3, NS5, NS7, NS9, NS10, NS11, NS12)

Neighborhood Groups

- Ironwood (NS4)
- Carriage Hills (NS9)
- Pinehurst (NS9)
- Pheasant Ridge (NS10)

Community Facilities

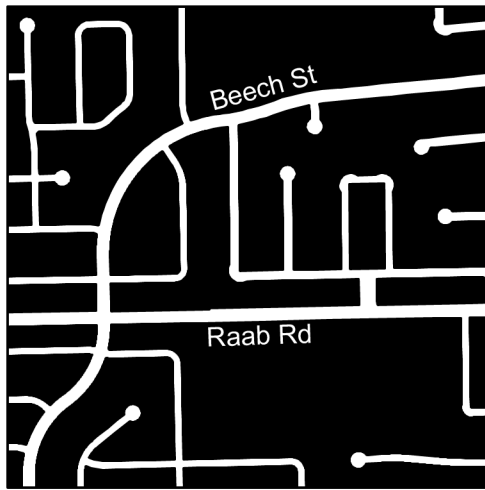
- Churches (NS6, NS7, NS11)
- Parks within neighborhood boundaries: Ironwood Park (NS1), Ironwood Golf Course, Savannah Green Park (NS8), Kelly Detention Basin Park (NS8), East Detention Basin Park (NS9), Fransen Nature Area (NS9)

In Close Proximity

- White Oak Park (Bloomington, near NS2)
- Champion Fields (NS3)
- Rosa Parks Commons/East Detention Basin Park (NS5, NS9, NS10)
- Calvary Acres Recreation Area (private; near NS5)
- One Normal Plaza (NS8)
- Carden Park (NS10)
- Shepard Park (NS12)

Connected

Because of their location, many are outside the transit network and too far away from existing activity centers, parks, and the trail to permit walking. Internally, streets are generally not well connected, with discontinuous street patterns making it difficult in many places to get from Point A to Point B comfortably and efficiently. It is not uncommon for residents to have to walk 10 minutes to reach a destination a few hundred feet away due to the lack of direct pedestrian pathways.

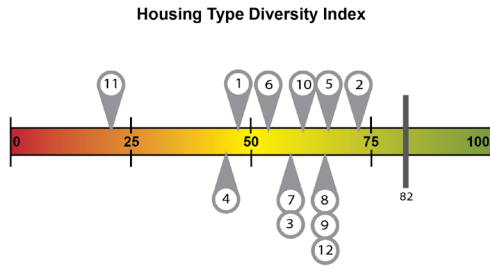


Compact

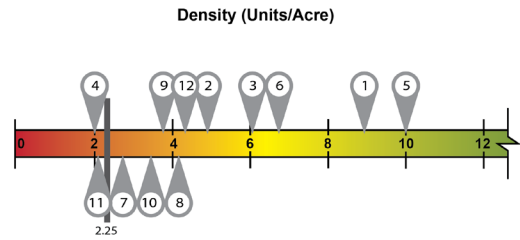
Overall, the New Suburban Neighborhoods have above-average residential density for the Town of Normal. This can be most directly explained by the presence of several large multifamily developments. Indirectly, the Town's emphasis on smart growth has led it to promote higher-density development, which can be credited for at least some of the relatively high density of these neighborhoods. Still, outside of the dense multifamily developments, the New Suburban Neighborhoods include some of the Town's lowest-density residential areas.

Complete and Compact Metrics

Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

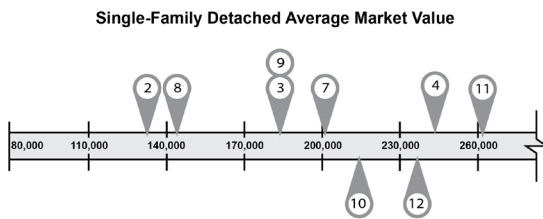


The New Suburban Neighborhoods offer a different array of housing types from what is available in earlier neighborhoods - larger single-family homes, more large apartment complexes, more duplexes and townhomes. While the housing options are reasonably diverse across the New Suburban Neighborhoods collectively, individual developments tend to be fairly homogeneous in terms of types and price points.

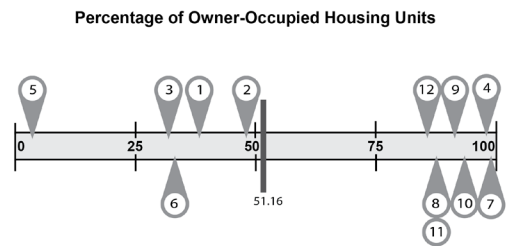


Residential density varies widely, with a mix of low-density neighborhoods dominated by large single-family homes (most common) and, on the other extreme, denser areas centered around large apartment complexes.

Note: Vacant parcels and the Ironwood Gold Course were not included in these calculations.

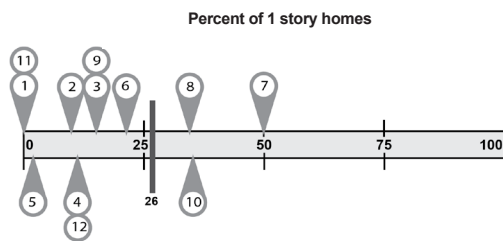
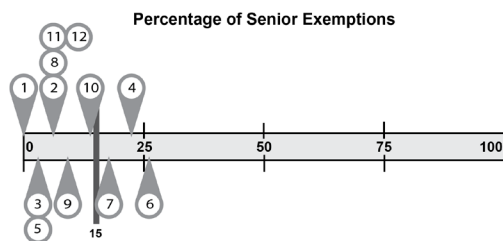


Single-family detached homes in the New Suburban Neighborhoods are generally more expensive than the Town median of approximately \$162,000.



There is a clear split in the New Suburban Neighborhoods with regard to tenancy, with several neighborhoods that are very ownership-oriented and several with a majority of rental units.

There are relatively few one-story homes. Senior Exemptions are similarly low, probably due to a mix of factors including the lack of one-story houses, a lack of affordable housing, distance from activity centers, and, in the case of some long-time residents, affinity for neighborhoods they have lived in for many years.



Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

2040 TARGETS

Housing Type Diversity Index should be at or above Town-wide average for any future developments.

Aim for at least 25% (Town-wide average) of all home in future developments to be One-Story homes, preferably built to universal accessibility standards.

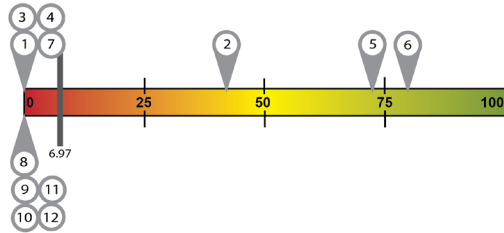
Average market value—Aim to increase the inventory of smaller homes to help keep the cost closer to the median home value.

Density—Aim to achieve at least 6 units per acre or higher for single-family houses in future developments.

Connected Metrics

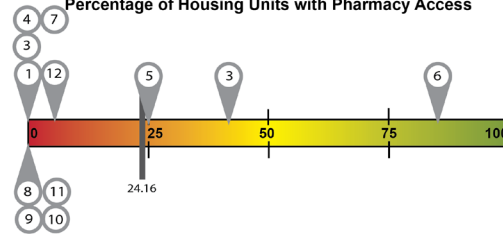
Note: Vertical line on the graph indicates Town average

Percentage of Housing Units with Grocery Access

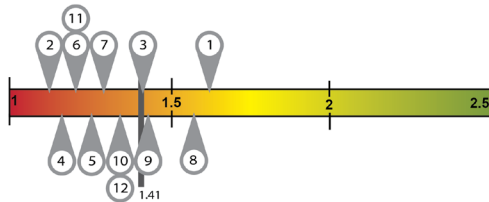


Grocery stores and pharmacies are typically outside of easy walking or biking distance.

Percentage of Housing Units with Pharmacy Access

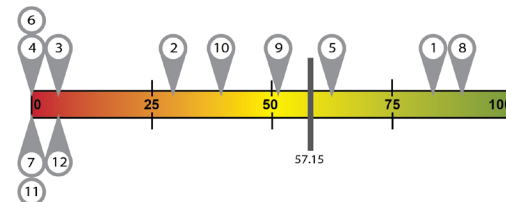


Link-Node Ratio



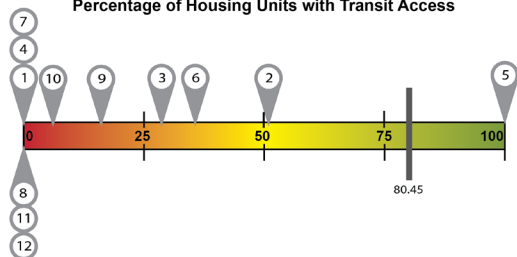
Street connectivity is mostly on the low end of the Town average, reflecting the hierarchical street patterns characteristic of suburban-style development.

Percentage of Housing Units with Park Access



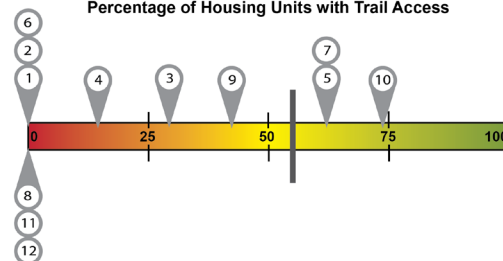
Park access is inconsistent, but mostly below the Town average. This is partly due to location, but also because outlying subdivisions have generally been designed without small neighborhood parks. Some do have private common green spaces (such as Ironwood Golfcourse) which are not captured here.

Percentage of Housing Units with Transit Access



The majority of these neighborhoods have poor transit access, especially after recent route redesigns that cut service to outlying areas.

Percentage of Housing Units with Trail Access



Trail access is generally low, though the Constitution Trail does reach a few of these neighborhoods. Bike access to these neighborhoods may be in the form of on-street bike facilities.

2040 TARGETS

Link-to-node ratio: aim to achieve at least 2 or more in future developments

Aim to improve access to grocery store, transit, Constitution Trail and park as opportunities present themselves

New Suburban/Future Neighborhood Recommendations

1. To the extent feasible, the Town should direct growth away from the Future Neighborhoods and more toward infill, redevelopment, and transit-oriented developments.

Such efforts are critical to achieve the vision of this comprehensive plan and those set forth by other adopted plans such as the Uptown 2.0 Plan and the Sustainability Plan.

2. Promote housing-type diversity in the New Suburban and Future Neighborhoods.

The Town should use a variety of development tools (both existing and new) to combat this trend and to increase the housing type diversity in these neighborhoods.

2a. For development proposals that have not resulted in any physical improvements on the ground, beyond the platted subdivisions shown on paper, consider working with the owners to identify other innovative housing, design, and development solutions that help the Town achieve its long-term vision while also helping the developers achieve their goals.

2b. Encourage affordable housing developments in areas identified as Opportunity Zones.

[See Housing Element for more discussion]

3. Ensure that development regulations and incentives allow the Town to foster complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods in new developments.

Interest and buy in from the local development community is critical for the quality of innovative residential developments. However, the Town has some options they can use to create a more conducive environment by adopting new policies/ regulations and strengthening existing ones that promote desired development patterns.

3a. Fund Neighborhood-level area plans. Specific plans that cover multiple development projects in a focused area can allow cities to define appropriate types of construction before a developer commits to a particular site. This process gives certainty to developers when they reach the development review process, thus encouraging desired development. The Town should consider creating a master plan for the area on the northeast side of Hershey and Fort Jesse. Most of this area is vacant land, much of which is under annexation agreements that are set to expire soon.

3b. Promote Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards in new neighborhoods.

3c. Review the Town's development regulations against adopted policies such as Complete Streets and national standards such as LEED ND that are geared towards mixed-use, multimodal, equitable, and environmentally sustainable developments. Make necessary revisions to facilitate desired development patterns

and streets in the future.

- 3d. Establish design standards that promote pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.
- 3e. Town should heighten the coordination of development proposals in this area with Unit 5.

According to a recent demographic study conducted by Unit 5, three of the district's schools are experiencing overcrowding issues: Grove Elementary School, located at the intersection of Airport and Shelbourne in NS 12; Towanda Elementary School, in Towanda, IL; and Normal Community High School (NCHS), located in LC 10. These schools are designated to serve many of the areas under current annexation agreements or designated for future growth.

- 3f. Require all future developments to be more complete, connected, and compact, using the targets and metrics established in this chapter.

Growth Forecast for New Suburban/Future Neighborhoods

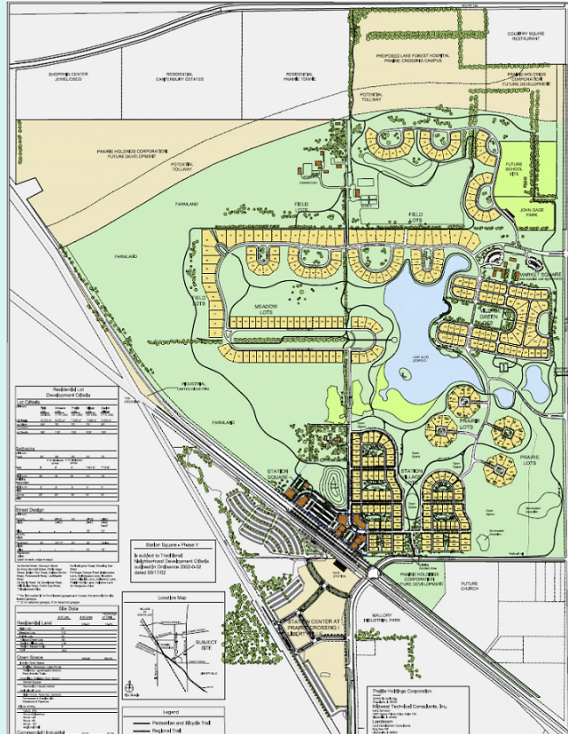
These areas are positioned well to accommodate new growth and development. Many of the Town's existing pre-annexation and annexation agreements are within the boundaries of these neighborhoods [See Map FN5]. Most of the proposed development is in the form of large single-family residential units. In addition, over 2,000 acres of land are designated for future neighborhood development in the three growth tiers identified in the Land Use section.

To coordinate growth and development in the New Suburban/ Future Neighborhoods, the Town should prioritize the creation of a comprehensive annexation policy that takes into account the land use, development, and growth priorities outlined in this plan, along with fiscal considerations and inter-governmental coordination. Current annexation agreements should be evaluated through the lens of the new policy as they expire.

The Town's ability to hold all future neighborhood developments to a high standard will be critical to develop these neighborhoods as envisioned in this plan.

[See the Neighborhood Design Expectations callout box for Design Expectations of Future Neighborhoods]

Neighborhood/Area Master Planning Examples



Prairie Crossing, Grayslake, Illinois

A master planned effort primarily led by the developer

Prairie Crossing is a nationally recognized conservation community in Grayslake, Illinois. The community, master planned in 1995, is built on over 650 acres, with over 60% preserved as open space, residential amenities, agricultural land. This community is rooted in 10 important guiding principles- environmental protection and enhancement, a healthy lifestyle, a sense of place and community, economic and racial diversity, multi-modal transportation, energy conservation, lifelong learning and education, aesthetic design and high-quality construction and economic viability.

Prairie restoration and a working organic farm, both protected by conservation easements, are among the special environmental features of this development.

Curtis Road Interchange, Champaign, Illinois

A master planned effort primarily led by the municipality

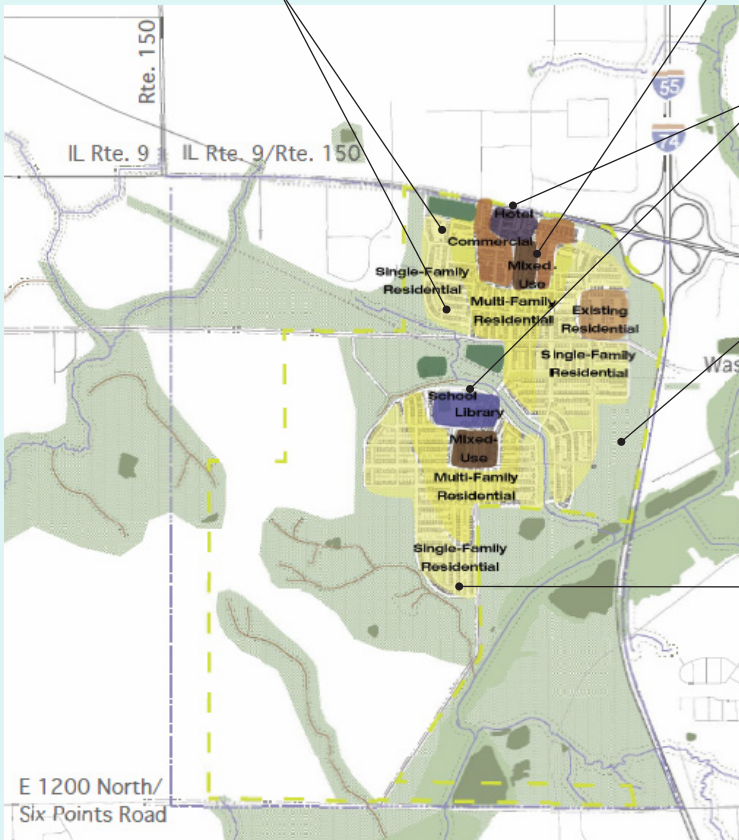
Champaign adopted the Curtis Road Interchange Master Plan, a special area plan that calls for mixed uses, a walkable environment, and other sustainable development features. To implement the master plan, Champaign created and applied three new zoning districts: the Urban Neighborhood-Residential, Urban Neighborhood-Activity Center, and Urban Neighborhood-Corporate. Developments in these new districts require hidden garage entrances, bicycle facilities for certain office and non-residential commercial buildings, a transit hub and transit amenities, street trees, streets oriented to maximize solar access, building entries abutting streets or pedestrian walkways, minimum transparency for facades, and increased energy efficiency requirements for buildings.



Source: US Green Building Council (USGBC)

Neighborhood Design Expectations

Residential uses provide a broad range of housing types and price levels in neighborhoods that allow for a mix of people with diverse needs. Residential types such as small lot single-family, attached residential dwellings, townhomes, condo dwellings, apartments, and institutional and civic uses should be intermixed through compatible design and a master plan. Higher residential densities should be located closer to the "Centers".



Residential uses may be located on upper floors to promote diversity and a successful pedestrian environment.

Civic, institutional and commercial activity should be embedded within neighborhoods, rather than isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Nonresidential uses should be limited to compact, pedestrian/neighborhood-oriented services rather than large-scale or automotive-oriented uses.

A neighborhood green space should be sized to allow for both active and passive uses and accessed predominantly by public streets. Neighborhood parks should be located within 1/4 mile for easy access.

The street layout should be interconnected, adjusted to topography, natural green space, and corridors. Where through street connections are not feasible due to topography or other issues, open space areas or looped streets with neighborhood greens to create a sense of place are preferred over cul-de-sacs. Adjacent residential developments are connected with streets, trails, and other features to function as cohesive neighborhoods rather than isolated subdivisions.

Illustration featuring Traditional Neighborhood Development;
Source: Development Impact Study, Bloomington-Normal, Illinois 2005



Stormwater detention facilities should add aesthetic value and provide recreational opportunities.

Photo: Blackstone Trails in Normal



Residential streets should accommodate all users, encourage neighborhood interactions, and become vibrant places instead of being the exclusive domain for cars.

Photo source: www.opticosdesign.com



Gifts and Accessories

CENTERS

SPREAD

NORTH STREET
TATTOO COMPANY

OPEN

Including YOU!

Centers are the hubs of activity that, along with neighborhoods, give a community its shape and identity. Centers come in a variety of forms, sizes, and stages of evolution.



Generally speaking, while neighborhoods tend to be quiet, peaceful, and centered on residential development, with potential for complementary commercial uses, centers are generally busy areas with dense concentrations of commercial, educational, recreational, and institutional activity, with potential for complementary residential uses.

Normal's centers, even more than its neighborhoods, are emblematic of the sprawling development patterns of the past several decades. Many are only accessible via arterial roads, and most are almost purely auto-oriented and are single-use. Along Veterans Parkway, perhaps the classic example of this theme, there are several miles of strip malls lining either side of the road, with as much space devoted to parking lots as to the destinations they serve. While many of these developments have been commercially successful, most fall short on all three of the Complete/Connected/Compact criteria. They are commercial spaces, not vibrant places.

Even the commercial success that has sustained this type of development should not be expected to continue indefinitely. Strip malls around the country have struggled in recent years with the onset of e-commerce, which will likely continue to replace brick-and-mortar stores. This is already happening in Bloomington-Normal. As this trend continues, the Town's population growth slows (which is expected after decades of very fast growth), and the focus shifts more and more toward infill development over sprawl, the challenge will be to reshape the centers to be more complete, connected, and compact.



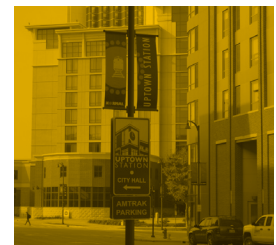
Neighborhood Centers F2.4



Local Centers F2.8



Regional Centers F2.14



Town Center F2.18

This will not, for the most part, entail wholesale replacement, which would be neither possible nor desirable in most cases. Rather, the Town should focus on “sprawl repair”—working with property owners and developers to repurpose existing spaces to make them denser, more accessible, and offering a vibrant mix of uses. This may include regulatory changes, incentives and collaboration, and, in spaces where significant evolution is expected, dedicated sub-area plans. If and when commercial centers fail, the Town should consider adapting them for public use, taking the opportunity to create desirable public places.

This section evaluates centers in three different dimensions: scale, development/redevelopment potential, and use.

DEFINITIONS

By Scale

Neighborhood Center: small-scale centers, primarily serving a few neighborhoods (or even just one) at a time.

Local Center: mid-sized centers that serve the entire BN community, but generally do not attract many external visitors.

Regional Center: large-scale centers that have an impact reaching beyond the BN metro area—retail centers that attract shoppers from other Central Illinois metros, regional employers, major educational institutions, hospitals, etc.

Town Center: mixed use, commercial, institutional, and cultural center at the heart of the Town.

By Development/Redevelopment Potential

Emerging: Centers that have significant amounts of undeveloped or under-developed land.

Evolving: Centers that are commercially successful today but have room for improvement.

Established: Centers where not much change is expected or are under the control of a large institution.

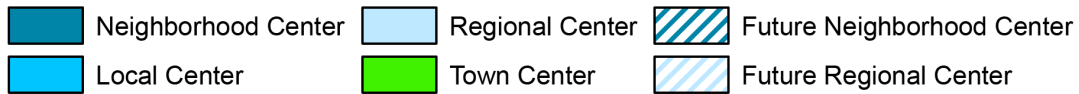
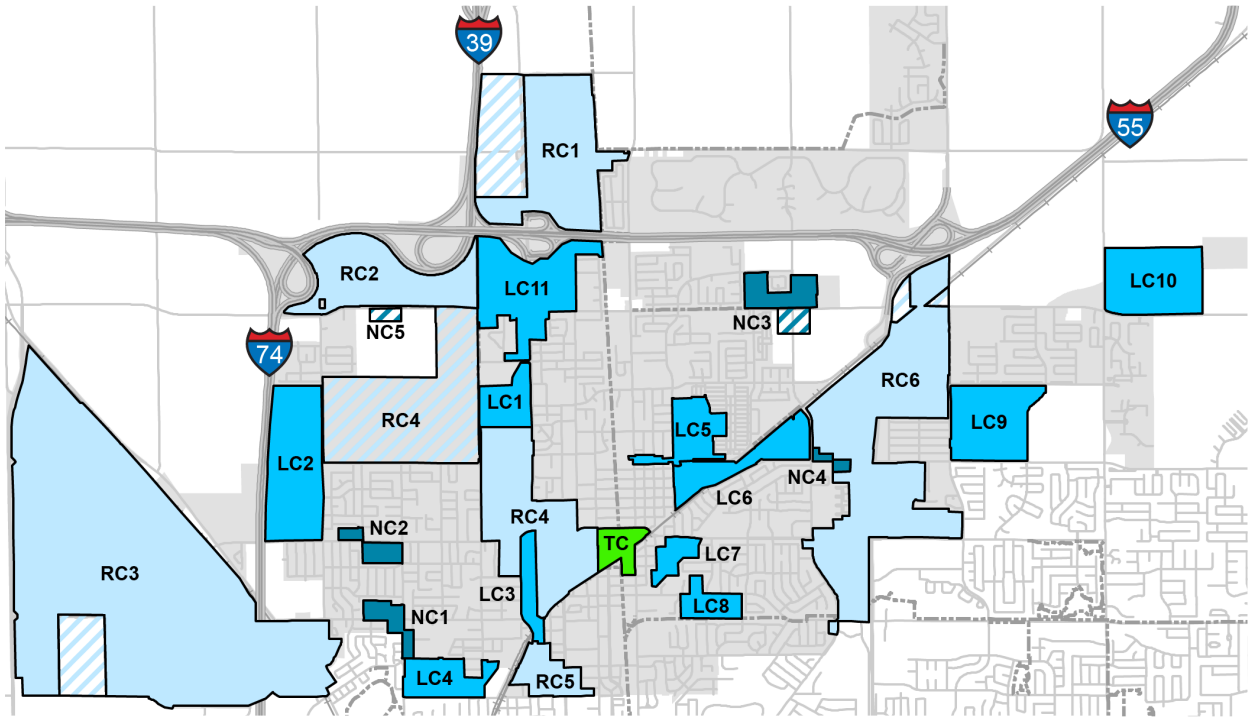
Special: Centers that have historical, cultural or other unique characteristics.

LEGEND

- RC Regional Centers
- LC Local Centers
- NC Neighborhood Centers
- TC Town Center

SPECIAL	ESTABLISHED
<div style="background-color: #3CB371; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">TC</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC5</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px;">RC2</div> <div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px;">RC4</div> <div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px;">RC5</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC2</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC4</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC7</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC8</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC10</div> </div>
EMERGING	EVOLVING
<div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;">RC3</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC9</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC11</div> </div> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px;">NC5</div>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px;">RC1</div> <div style="background-color: #ADD8E6; color: white; padding: 5px;">RC6</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC1</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC3</div> <div style="background-color: #00BFFF; color: white; padding: 5px;">LC6</div> </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px;">NC1</div> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px;">NC2</div> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px;">NC3</div> <div style="background-color: #008080; color: white; padding: 5px;">NC4</div> </div>

MAP FACT: Centers



Neighborhood Centers

- NC1 Cottage/Hovey
- NC2 Parkside/College
- NC3 Towanda/Raab
- NC4 Towanda/Fort Jesse
- NC5 Heartland Area [Future]

Local Centers

- LC1 Fairview Park Area-Civic/Commercial
- LC2 Parkside-Civic
- LC3 ISU Oriented Retail/Mixed-Use Center
- LC4 Public Works Area
- LC5 One Normal Plaza/Route 66-Cultural
- LC6 Railroad-Commercial/Industrial
- LC7 Anderson Park/Chiddix School Area-Civic
- LC8 Colene Hoose/Community Cancer Center-Civic
- LC9 Fort Jesse Area/Hershey Area-Office/Civic/Commercial/Residential
- LC10 Normal Community High School (NCHS) Area-Civic
- LC11 Main Street/I55-Commercial/Gateway

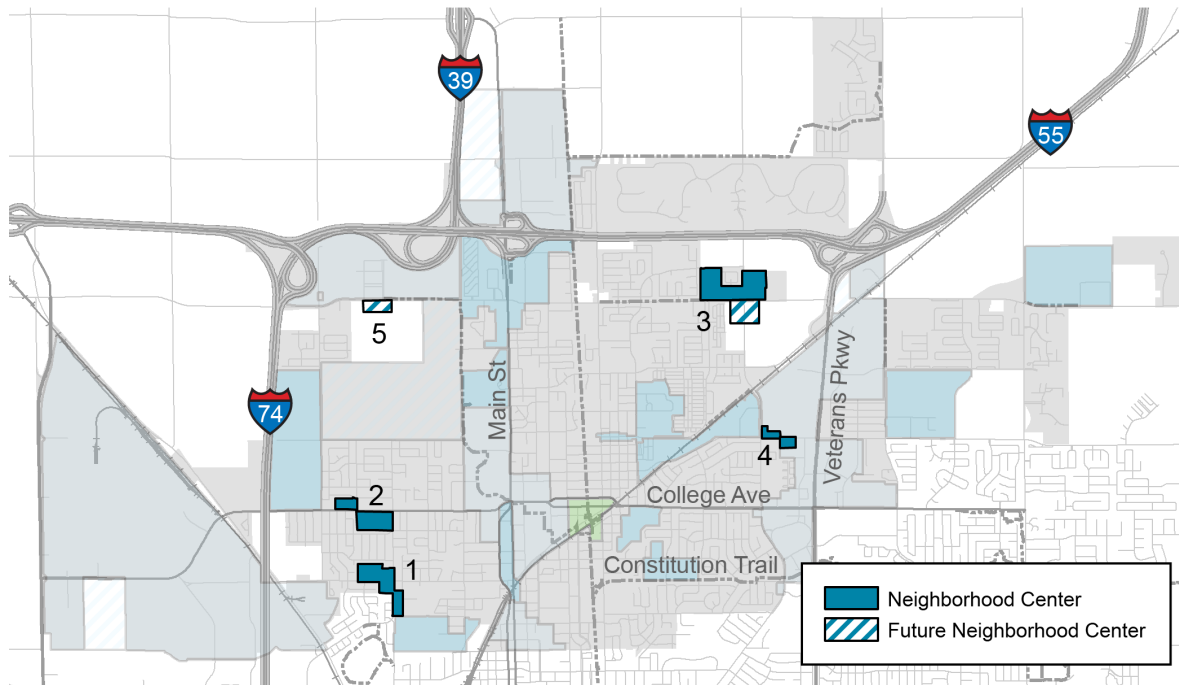
Regional Centers

- RC1 Main Street/I55 Industrial/Gateway
- RC2 Heartland & CornCrib-Civic/Institutional
- RC3 Mitsubishi/Rivian Area-Industrial
- RC4 Illinois State University-Institutional
- RC5 Advocate BroMenn Area-Institutional
- RC6 Veterans Parkway-Commercial

Town Center: Uptown

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS

MAP FAC2: NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS



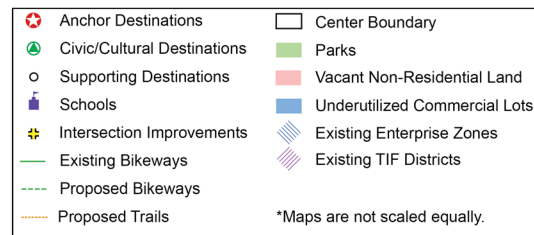
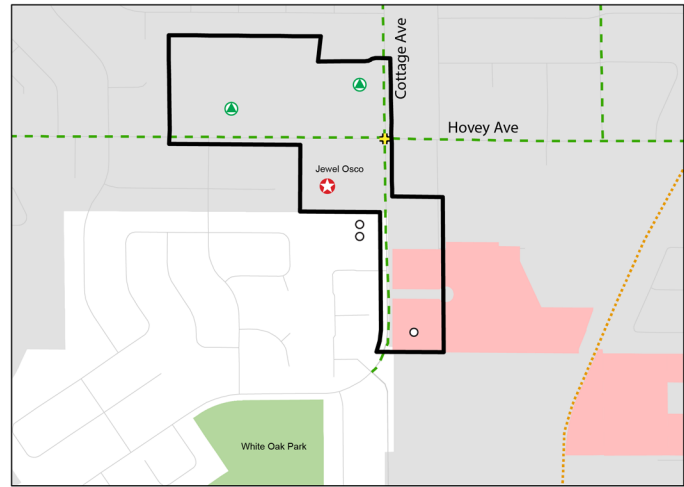
Neighborhood Centers may include small shops, grocery stores, restaurants, cafes, ice cream parlors, and common green spaces, all within easy walking distance for a significant number of residents. By providing convenient access to goods and services, gathering spaces, and even, in some cases, cultural amenities, these places become key components of complete and connected neighborhoods.

In Normal, such neighborhood hubs are uncommon. Neighborhood retail has been on the decline for more than five decades, both in Normal and in other communities, as sprawl and auto-centric, single-use urban design have made neighborhoods less walkable and made it difficult to sustain the kind of density and accessibility on which neighborhood centers thrive. It could be argued that Normal actually has no real neighborhood centers at present—only a few local centers that are intended to serve the broader community, but which happen to be located in the midst of residential areas and have adequate multimodal access.

The six neighborhood centers identified here were chosen not so much because they are already strong neighborhood centers, but because they are the centers most likely to become strong neighborhood centers over the planning horizon. All six are located within walking distance of a substantial number of residents, and all but one are classified as emerging or evolving, meaning that they are expected to change significantly and have the potential to do so in a way that make them more positive assets for the surrounding neighborhoods.

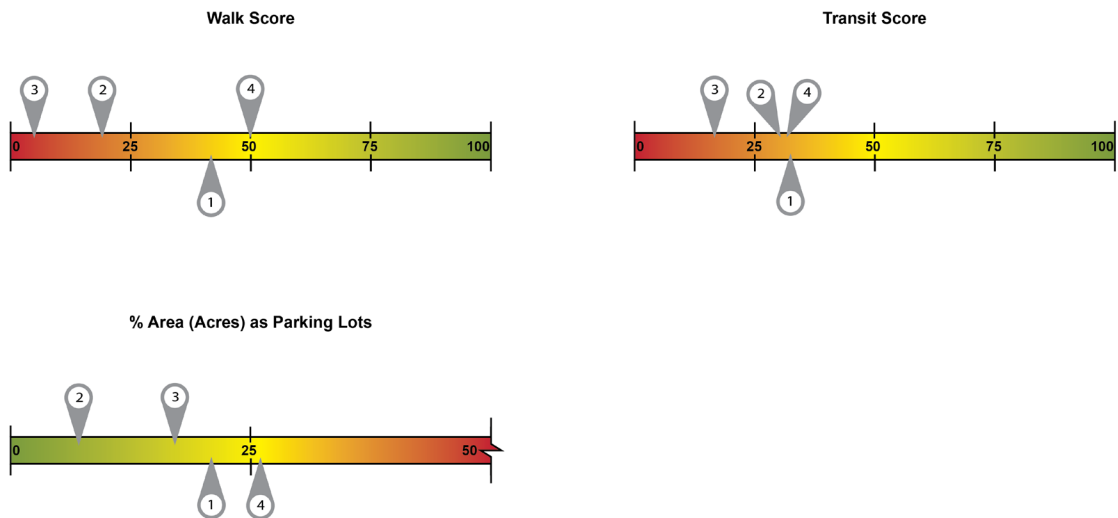
1. Cottage/Hovey

This Center includes a horizontal mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses. Anchored by a grocery on the southwest corner of Cottage and Hovey, this center also supports two smaller chain establishments (connected by a parking lot located in Bloomington), a home goods establishment (Dollar General), and a couple of churches. This center also includes an apartment complex that is home to low to moderate income senior households.

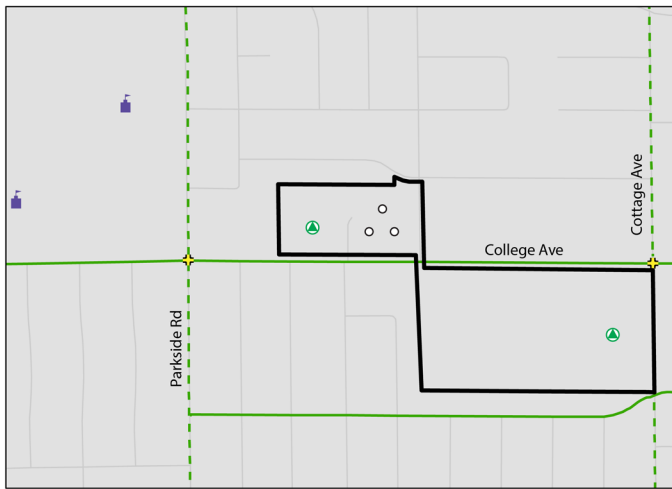


Multimodal access is not outstanding, with a Walk Score of 42 and Transit Score of 34 (though there is, at time of writing, a bus route that runs between Walmart in West Bloomington and Uptown Normal, both major destinations).

The surrounding area is primarily residential, with a mix of more apartments, townhouses, and single-family detached homes. Some of these neighborhoods are well-connected to the center itself, while others are near by but cut off by insular suburban-style design.



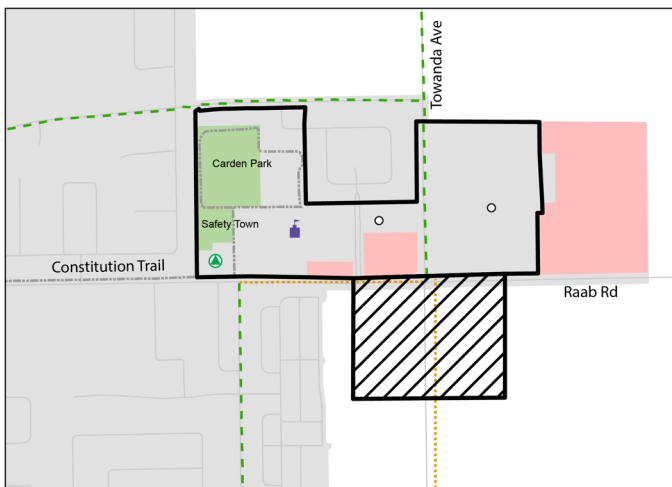
2. Parkside/College



Spanning an area on either side of W. College Avenue between Parkside and Cottage, this center also includes a horizontal mix of uses. To the northwest lies a small shopping center (University Park Plaza), including a local institution—Carl's Ice Cream. In the southeast is the Holy Cross cemetery and vacant land owned by the church. This area is included in the Center to show traffic patterns.

The surrounding area is primarily low-density residential, mostly affordable single-family detached homes. University Park Plaza shows the most potential for evolution. A denser and more walkable layout, centered on the ice cream shop, would make this a more desirable neighborhood destination and community hub.

3. Towanda/Raab

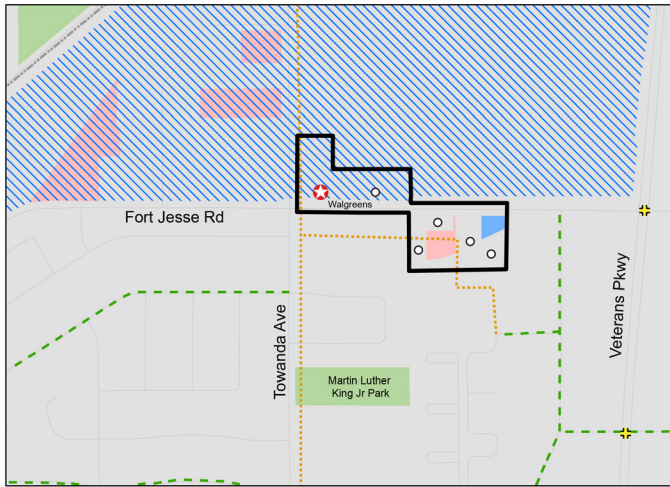


The western half of this center is structured around community facilities, including (from north to south) Carden Park, Prairieland Elementary School, and Fire Station #3. Taking advantage of the presence of all three facilities, Carden Park includes Safety Town, an educational play area that includes mock roads, street signs, and railroad tracks, which children can navigate on provided tricycles.

An assisted living facility and a private early childhood education facility can be found on the west side of Towanda Avenue. Across Towanda to the east is a Methodist Church and a vacant parcel owned by the church.

Surrounding uses include low-density suburban-style housing, plus vacant fields south of Raab on either side of Towanda. The amount of vacant land and the impending fire station relocation presents opportunities to utilize existing assets and create a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood center.

4. Towanda/Fort Jesse



Located at the intersection of two busy four-lane roads, this area includes a pharmacy and a bank to the northwest (north side of Fort Jesse), plus a small collection of businesses to the southeast (south side of Fort Jesse, between Towanda and Landmark), including Fort Jesse Cafe—a coffee shop and breakfast place treasured by the locals.

Anchor Destinations	Center Boundary
Civic/Cultural Destinations	Parks
Supporting Destinations	Vacant Non-Residential Land
Schools	Underutilized Commercial Lots
Intersection Improvements	Existing Enterprise Zones
Existing Bikeways	Existing TIF Districts
Proposed Bikeways	
Proposed Trails	

*Maps are not scaled equally.



Jewel-Osco at Cottage and Hovey NC1



Italian Ice at Towanda and Fort Jesse NC4



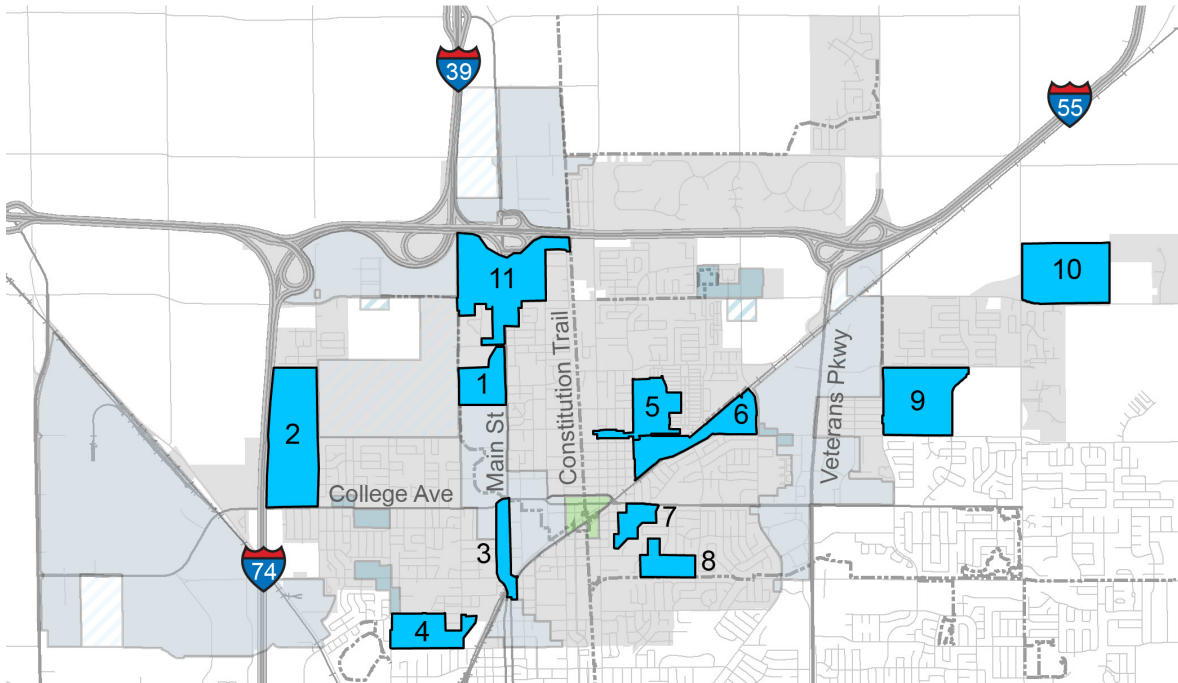
Safety Town in Carden Park next to Prairieland School in NC3



Carl's Ice Cream at Parkside and College NC2

LOCAL CENTERS

MAP FAC3: LOCAL CENTERS



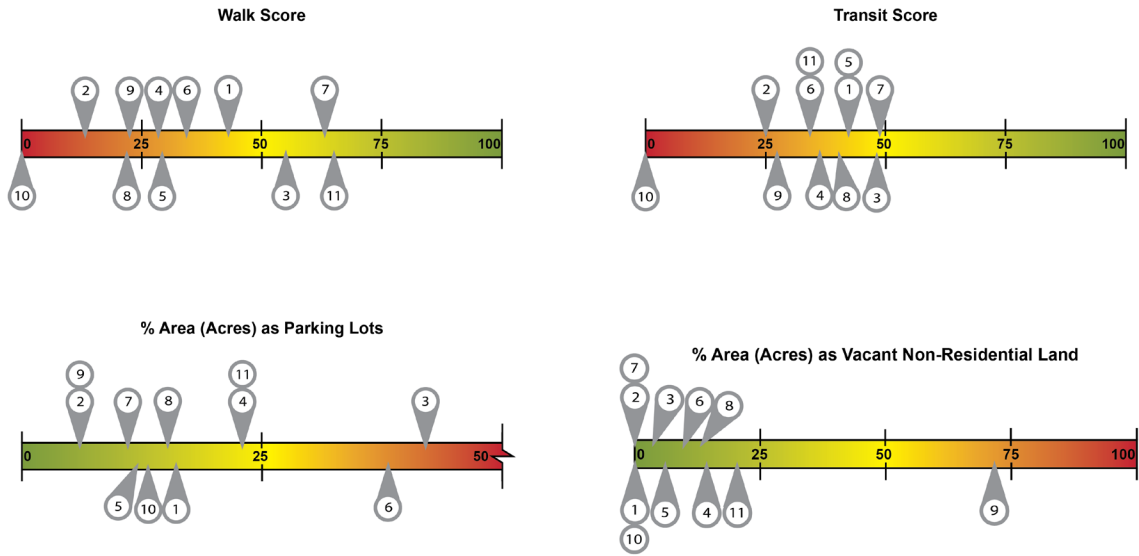
Normal’s eleven Local Centers support a mix of retail, office, civic/institutional uses, and even light industrial uses. They include five established centers, four evolving centers, one emerging center, and, in the One Normal Plaza/Rt. 66 area (LC5), a unique “special center” that is likely to be a major focus of planning over the lifetime of this plan.

Eight of the Local Centers are under at least some degree of institutional control, whether by the Town or by other public or private institutions (primarily Unit 5). The three non-institutional centers (LC6, LC9, and LC11) have more typical auto-oriented design with separated uses—mostly industrial with some complementary commercial uses in LC6, offices in LC9, and a shopping complex anchored by a grocery store and cinema in LC11.

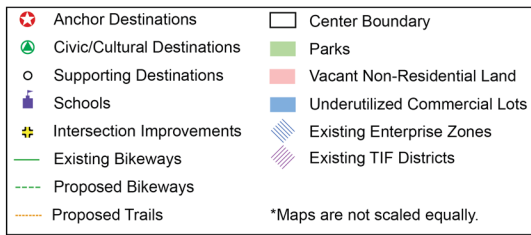
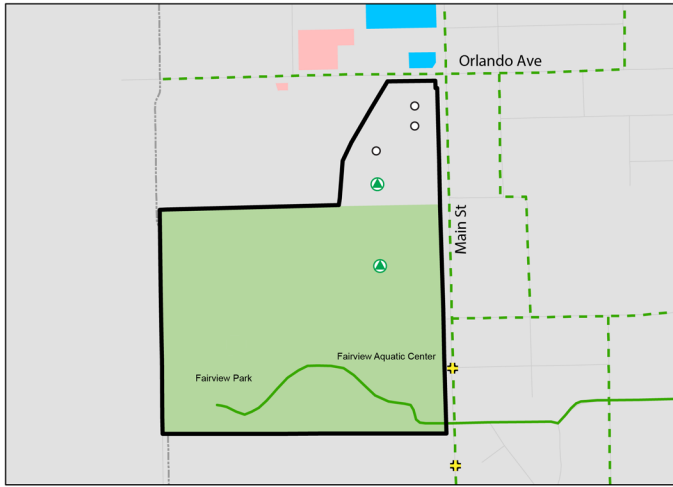
Like most parts of the community, the local centers are predominantly auto-oriented with excessive parking. Multimodal accessibility is generally limited. While Local Centers, by their nature, serve a larger geographic area than neighborhood centers, and must therefore be more accommodating to cars, they should still have good multimodal access and be reasonably well connected to surrounding neighborhoods and centers. This is especially imperative for critical community facilities like parks and schools, which are common in the local centers. Only three of the eleven centers have Walk Scores greater than 50, and none have Transit Scores greater than 50 [See Metrics in the Introduction for explanations of Walk Score and Transit Score].

Unlike the Neighborhood and Regional Centers, only a few of the Local Centers have

significant amounts of vacant land and under-utilized commercial land, but for the evolving and emerging areas, and areas controlled directly by the Town, there are still opportunities to shape development in a positive direction. Centers that may benefit from such targeted efforts include LC1, LC3, LC5, LC6, and LC9. These centers are outlined in greater detail in the following pages.



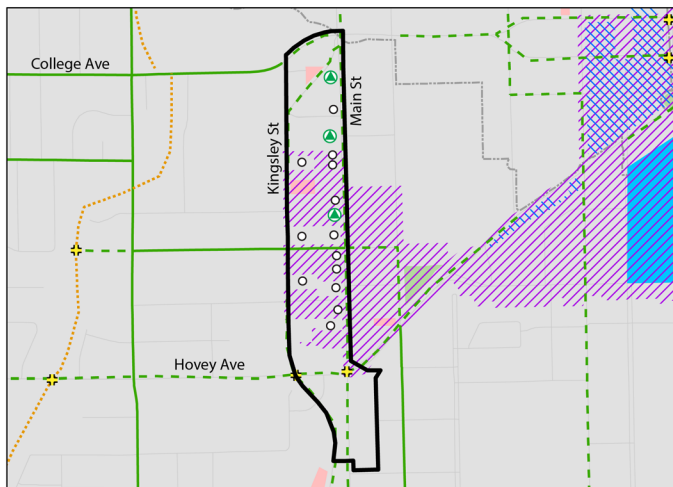
1. Fairview Park Area



This area includes Fairview Park, the McLean County Nursing Home, and a strip mall. This area has many community destinations. However, there are some under-utilized properties that offer immediate opportunities for the Town. For example, the old Regional Office of Education building, which is owned by the County, is currently vacant. Given this public ownership and the surrounding land uses such as assisted living, recreational and retail, supportive housing options should be explored.

There are also under-utilized spaces in the strip mall on the north end of this Center.

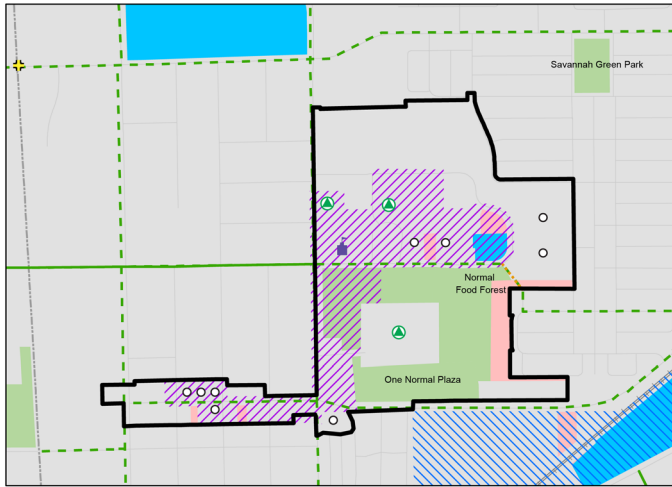
3. ISU-Oriented Retail & Mixed-Use



LC3—ISU-Oriented Retail and Mixed-Use Center: The Town has used a form-based code overlay zone to foster mixed-use development in this area, with some success. While the entire Main Street corridor has long been a target for planning efforts (most notably the Main Street Transportation Improvement Feasibility Study), the Main Street right-of-way is controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), making

wholesale redevelopment more challenging. [See Transportation section in the Corridors Chapter for more information.] The Town should continue to use the Main Street Transportation Improvement Feasibility Study to transform the area.

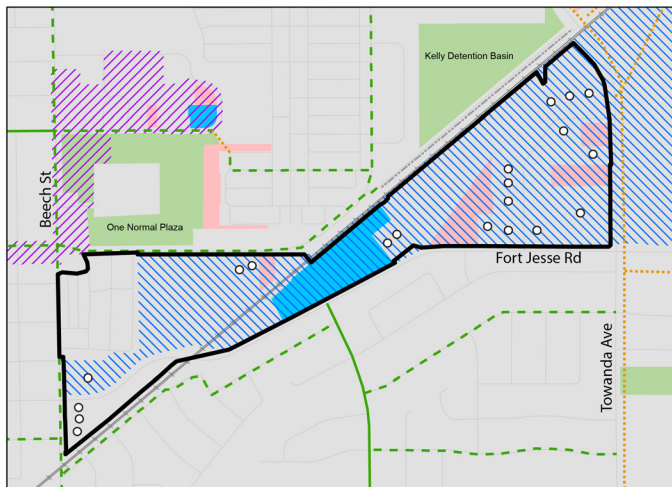
5. One Normal Plaza/Route 66



This area houses a unique mix of institutional, recreational, commercial, and residential uses in a serene setting. As the former home of the Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Children’s School (ISSCS), this area holds historic and cultural value. Its proximity to Uptown and the ISU campus and its location along Route 66 and other transportation corridors can be logged as assets for this area. Despite the fact that this site has

been identified in many plans as needing revitalization, starting with the 2015 Vision Report adopted in 1990, and has been part of a TIF district since 2009, none of those plans have come to fruition. Given the eclectic mix of uses and its incredible potential to become a destination, this area could greatly benefit from a sub-area plan. It is also important to note that Normandy Village, encircled by the one Normal Plaza area, has new owners who have expressed a great deal of interest in making it an environmentally sustainable campus and want to be part of the planning process. This area also holds great potential to become a food innovation district. [See *Economic Vitality Element* for more discussion on this.]

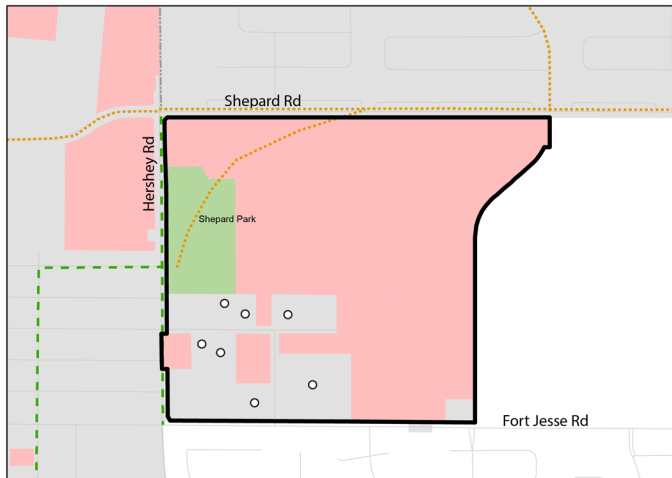
6. Railroad—Commercial/Industrial



This area is predominantly zoned for manufacturing. Concrete plants, particularly along the railroad, and auto shops are the predominant uses in this area. Some of these manufacturing uses are remnants of the past and can be characterized as undesirable, given the surrounding land uses today. This center has some vacant and under-utilized areas.

While this area cannot (and should not, given the presence of established businesses) be transformed all at once, over time opportunities should be taken to facilitate development that is complementary to the surrounding land uses. The Town should also consider the south portion of this Center during the sub-area planning of LC5 (the One Normal Plaza and Route 66 area).

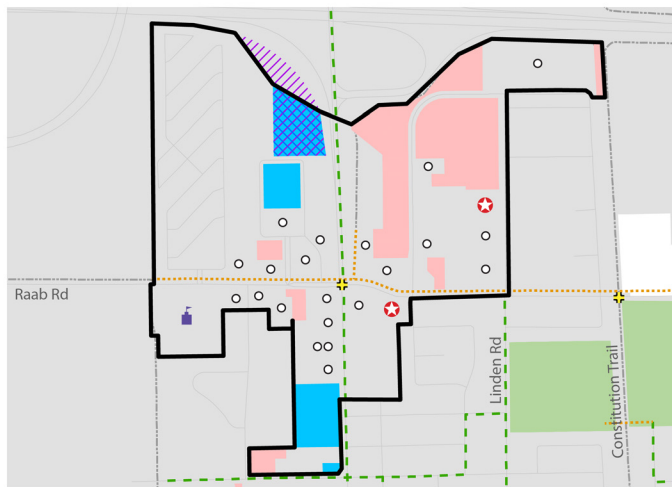
9. Fort Jesse/Hershey Area



This area, covering a total of 320 acres, is under an annexation agreement approved in February 2000. According to the agreement, approximately 167 acres have been annexed and zoned for office uses to the east (area outline in black). The remainder is earmarked for a mix of residential development at various densities and some commercial uses. While some of the annexed area has already been developed as office space, the vast majority is vacant land

remaining to be developed. The current annexation agreement for this area is set to expire in 2020. That expiration presents a great opportunity for the Town to work with the developer to create a sub-area plan that not only benefits this site but has the potential to convert a collection of surrounding sprawling subdivisions into complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods.

11. Main/Raab (Gateway Area)

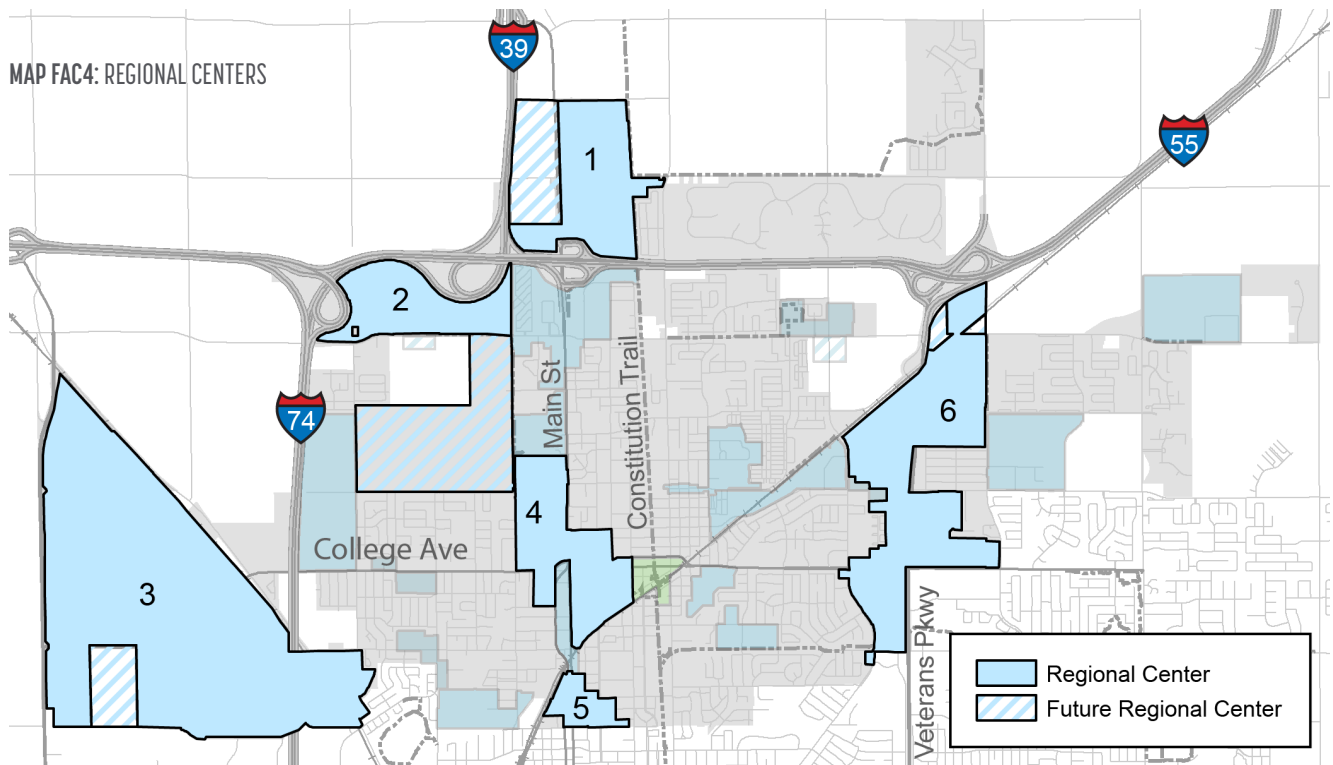


Also known as the Constitution Trail Centre, this large shopping center includes a Schnucks grocery store and a mix of other restaurants and retail establishments. A 14-screen cinema to the northeast is also part of the same complex, but it is disconnected from the main portion by a large, undeveloped parcel. The developed area is currently dominated by excessive parking and a good deal of vacant land.

It is adjacent to a large number of high density residential units. A pair of apartment complexes and a number of townhomes are located immediately to the east across School Street (the Rockingham-School area, or NS5), with a lower-density neighborhood (the Bunker Hill area, or ES1) to the south. Because of the surrounding residential density, this center has the potential to evolve into a destination that better serves the surrounding neighborhoods. The west half of this center serves both the Interstate users and the local community with destinations like gas stations, fast food restaurants, hotels, coffee shops, and Lincoln College. Given the range of uses and its geographic location as a gateway, the Town should prioritize 1) improving the aesthetics of the entire Center through the use of architectural and landscape design standards, and 2) improving multimodal transportation access. The vacant sites within this area can also be used to test Mixed-Use Zoning districts. *[See recommendation 1.]*



REGIONAL CENTERS

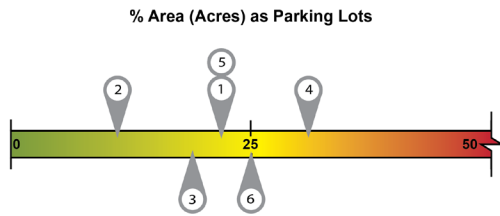
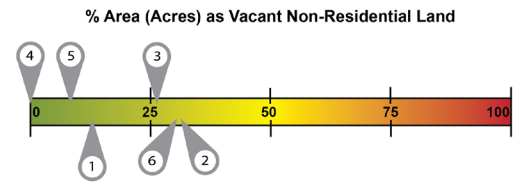
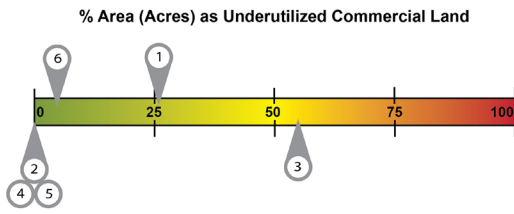


The Town's six Regional Centers include three that are primarily controlled by third-party institutions: RC2 (Heartland Community College), RC4 (Illinois State University), and RC5 (Advocate BroMenn Medical Center). These three institutions serve a significant proportion of the Town's population and are major employment centers. All three are established centers.

The other three Regional Centers include a major community gateway with office, freight, and industrial uses (RC1, Main/51 area); a major industrial area and emerging job center (RC3, Mitsubishi/Rivian); and the primary commercial corridor in Bloomington-Normal (RC6, Veterans Parkway). Of this trio, RC1 and RC6 are classified as evolving, and RC3 is emerging. These regional centers are located on the edges of Town, distant from the Town center, accessible mainly by major thoroughfares. They are discussed more thoroughly in the following pages.

ISU and Advocate BroMenn are the exceptions, both being centrally located (the former with respect to Normal, the latter with respect to Bloomington-Normal as a whole). Because of the importance of these centers, most have at least some degree of transit and trail access, but access by foot and bicycle is still generally more difficult than by car. As elsewhere, low densities and auto-oriented design, including excessive parking, are impediments to accessibility of these Centers.

[See Recommendations for more information on sub-area planning and “sprawl repair” opportunities for these centers.]



	Walk Score	Transit Score
RC1	7	0
RC2	3–62	27–33
RC3	0–7	0–27
RC4	40–69	44–50
RC5	62	41
RC6	37–61	19–37



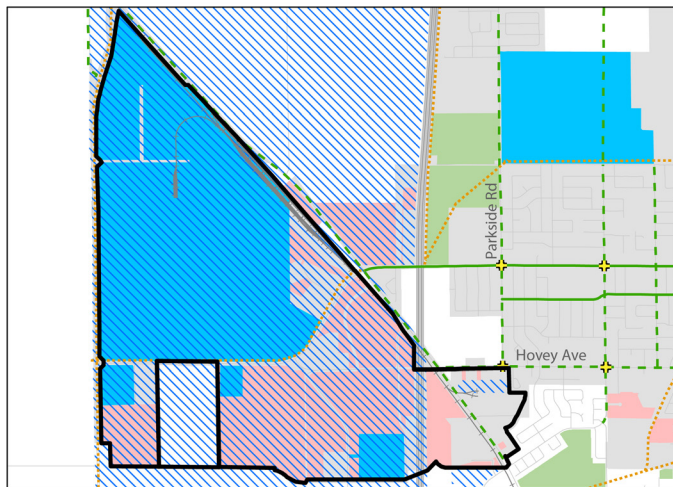
1. Main Street/I55 Gateway Area



This area is uniquely located at the intersection of I-39, I-55 and I-74. RC1 is predominantly zoned for manufacturing. While this area is performing moderately well, there are opportunities for improvement, including underutilized warehouses and vacant lots. There is a statewide initiative promoting the I-39 corridor for transportation and logistics uses. Given the current concentration of uses and available incentives such as the enterprise zone and the statewide emphasis on

this corridor, this area should continue to evolve as a transportation and logistics center for the community. This Center is also a prominent gateway. However, it is currently surrounded by farmland and is also in close proximity to Nicor Gas operations. Future expansion should take into account the sustainability goals of this plan, along with the fact that it is a prominent community gateway. The landscaping in this area should aim to improve the aesthetics and shield huge blank walls typical of the industrial structures.

3. West Side Industrial Area

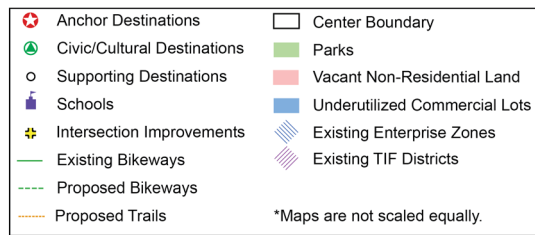
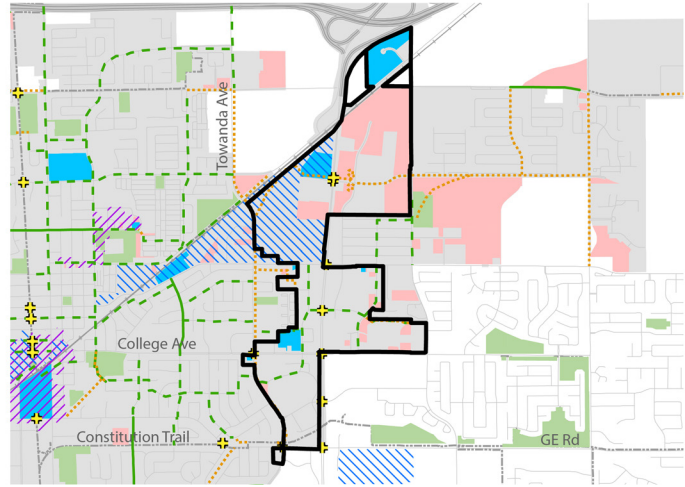


As the lone emerging center in this group, RC3 has the greatest opportunity for dynamic change. Most of the area, formerly the site of the former Mitsubishi Motors plant, is either vacant or underutilized and is zoned for manufacturing. It enjoys excellent road and rail transportation connections and is suitable for businesses in the Transportation and Logistics and Agribusiness target sectors identified in the BN Advantage strategy. It

is also part of the Enterprise Zone, which affords incentives for businesses located in the area. The Mitsubishi property was purchased by Rivian Automotive, a startup focused on electric and autonomous vehicles. Rivian has expressed interest in establishing partnerships to bring additional opportunities to their facility and to the general area. While some infrastructure systems may need to be improved, depending on the type and intensity of growth that occurs, this center holds strong potential as a major employment center drawing workers from within Bloomington-Normal and the broader Central Illinois area.

6. Veterans Parkway Commercial Area

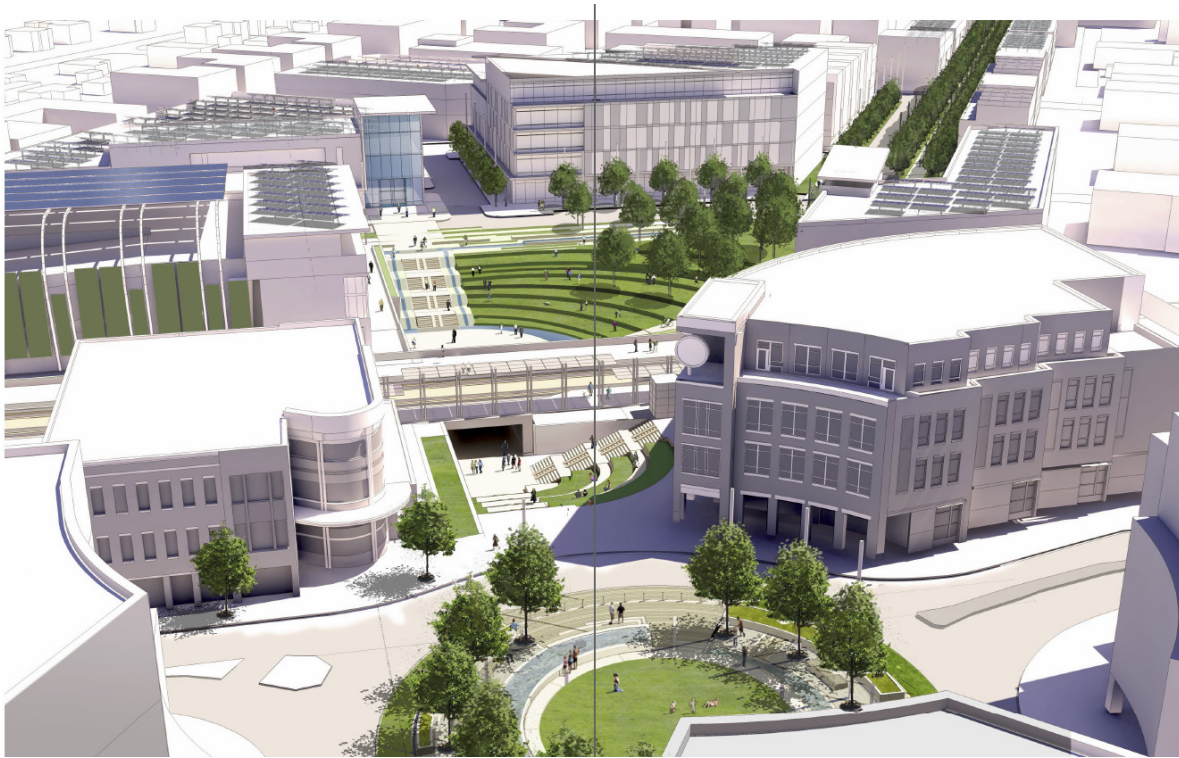
RC6 is a commercially successful corridor, but it is also a textbook example of sprawling commercial development, arrayed along either side of a multi-lane highway with strip shopping centers, big-box stores, office parks, and other auto-oriented commercial. Unfortunately, the recent shift toward online shopping is uprooting many big-box retailers, leaving their host communities with large empty buildings, parking lots, and other infrastructure around them to be repurposed and overhauled. While this is not a major problem in Normal today, the experiences of surrounding communities suggest that such problems may be imminent.



[See the Sprawl Repair Example in the callout box.]



TOWN CENTER



Proposed Updates to Uptown

Source Uptown Normal Illustrative Master Plan Update 2015

The Town's most consequential planning effort continues to be the redevelopment of Uptown Normal. The complex process of planning and executing the redevelopment of Uptown began more than fifteen years ago when the Downtown Renewal Plan was adopted in 2000.

While the plan is a continuous work in progress, many core improvements are in place. Uptown has become a major urban design success. Uptown Circle was certified under the pilot version of the LEED (4.38) Neighborhood Development Program in 2009. It set the standard for what smaller communities could accomplish and brought national recognition to Normal as a leader in multimodal transportation and sustainability. This sustainable, mixed-use, dense, urban, pedestrian-oriented district has become a major community destination.

In 2016, the Town hired the same firm that created the original plan, Farr Associates, to create a plan to redevelop the south side of the railroad tracks ("Uptown South"). The new plan, called the Uptown Normal Master Plan update, is also based on the New Urbanism model and proposes development with goals more robust than the original plan. These include:

1. **Take advantage of current market opportunities:** The plan points to strong retail demand (70,000 sq. ft.) and housing demand (over 900 units) and proposes that the new redevelopment program address both to the extent possible. It suggests gearing the housing toward non-students, especially young professionals and empty-nesters looking for a more urban lifestyle.
2. **Improve mobility for all users:** The plan provides specific guidance to make the streets immediately surrounding Uptown more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.
3. **Connect Uptown across the tracks:** Uptown Station needs a grade-separated crossing. After exploring three separate options, the plan proposes a well-designed underpass that reinforces the sense of place and increases property value south of the tracks.
4. **Increase development capacity on the remaining Uptown North sites:** Pointing to the scarcity of available sites in Uptown, the study suggests increasing development densities and limiting the remaining developable property to non-student housing and office space with retail on the lower levels.
5. **Redevelop Uptown South:** The large parcel remaining is the eight-acre site on which the old City Hall and Police Station are currently located. The plan proposes a high-density development with a mix of uses, including a relocated library, office space, a grocery store, higher-density residential, and green space.
6. **Intensify development in the neighborhoods:** Even with the Uptown North and Uptown South fully developed, there will still be an unmet potential market for urban-style housing. To provide a place for these residents and to bring more people within walking distance to Uptown, the surrounding neighborhoods and primary approach routes should be rezoned to promote higher densities.
7. **Raise the bar for sustainability by participating in the Living Communities Challenge:**
The International Living Futures Institute sets the highest standards for sustainable communities. Projects that meet their challenge go beyond the goal of simply minimizing harm and aim for self-sufficiency and substantial contributions to the health of the environment.

This comprehensive plan incorporates the Uptown Plan by reference and strongly supports its continued implementation. The Uptown Plan can be accessed through the Town of Normal website.



Recommendations

1. Increase density, intensity, and a mix of residential and non-residential land uses in the Centers (and along corridors). Utilize regulation and incentives to enable this type of development.

- 1a. Encourage higher densities in activity centers. Identify areas within or immediately adjacent to Centers that are zoned for low-density residential uses. Encourage rezoning those properties to higher densities.
- 1b. Enable mixed-use developments, both horizontal and vertical mixed uses. The Town currently encourages mixed-use developments in Uptown and along the Main Street corridor, as outlined in their respective area plans. The Town uses a form-based code overlay district to facilitate mixed-use developments in these areas.

In addition, the majority of the Town's Business Districts (C-1, B-1 and B-2) permit, by right, dwelling units located above the first floor. Unfortunately, these provisions alone have not resulted in much mixed-use development. This could be due to a variety of factors, including market conditions; a lack of interest from the development community; conflicting regulations regarding parking, landscaping and other requirements; or a lack of incentive for such developments. This issue needs to be further investigated.

Alternatively, the Town should investigate developing mixed-use zoning district designations, both for horizontal and for vertical mixes of uses. Such designations would allow the Town to better articulate their purpose and formulate appropriate regulations and incentives to facilitate multimodal, mixed-use developments of high quality.

Centers with high access to transit service, vacant land, or redevelopment opportunities, such as LC 11 (Main and Rabb) can be used as pilot sites for such a zone. This area has been identified in the Regional Housing Study as one with the potential to house a mix of affordable housing, assisted living, and supportive housing that can benefit from and support the existing retail in that area.

- 1c. Identify and address transition area issues creatively. Transition areas are areas where commercial uses are located next to residential uses. The Town should consider using architectural, open space, design, and technological solutions to facilitate transitions that minimize conflict, rather than focusing on separating those uses.
- 1d. Reduce parking minimums in Centers with good access to transit, walking, and biking.

[See HS 1.1e in the Health & Sustainability Element for more discussion on the need to rethink parking regulations.]

Center Design Expectations

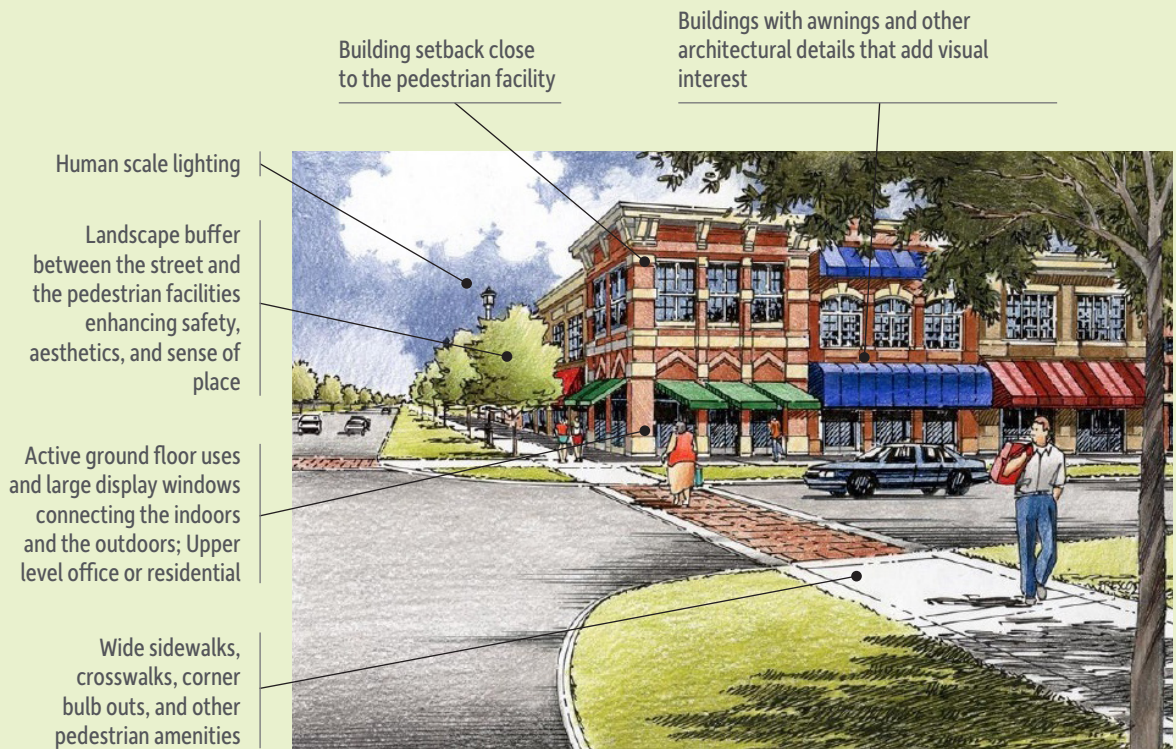


Illustration source: Huntington, VT; Text: MCRPC

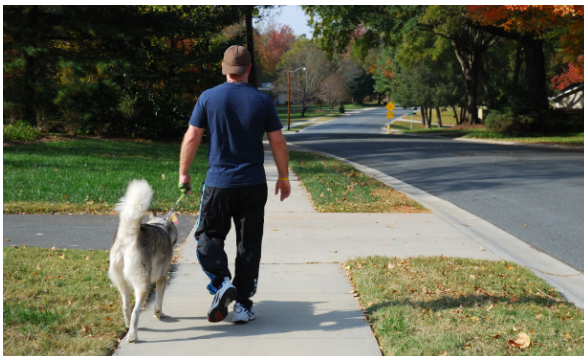
2. Improve multimodal access to the Centers.

- 2a. Revise the Town’s Design Standards to promote human-scale developments and enhance bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in all commercial developments. *[See the Center Design Expectations call out box.]*

3. Reinvigorate Neighborhood Centers.

Centers that provide convenient access to essential goods are crucial to creating complete and connected neighborhoods. However, neighborhood retail has been on a decline for more than five decades. In communities like Normal, market conditions that caused neighborhood commercial to decline are still in place. It takes an aggressive commitment by the public sector in partnership with private stakeholders to address negative influences before neighborhood retail can become sustainable in these areas. This plan fully recognizes that rebuilding Neighborhood Centers will be a difficult, lengthy, and complicated process, but it also recognizes that now is the time to focus on those efforts. As the Town reduces sprawl and enhances the attractiveness of its existing neighborhoods, the Neighborhood Centers will become more viable.

- 3a. Aim to establish more than ten places in each Neighborhood Center. Such Centers, with at least one anchor, can continue to thrive as vibrant neighborhood destinations. *[See the Project for Public Places initiative titled “The Power of 10+” for a more in depth analysis of this topic.]*
- 3b. Create opportunities for local and independent retail to thrive. “Mom and pop” shops tend to have more stake in ensuring the success of these centers. *[See Strategy EV 1.1 in the Economic Vitality Element for additional information on supporting small and local businesses.]*
- 3c. Make improvements that prioritize pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders along with promoting pedestrian-scale developments in Neighborhood Centers. Such place-based improvements are incentives to help sustain existing and attract new commercial to the area.



4. Develop area plans for emerging and special centers.

As identified in the *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report*, the Town currently has over 1,000 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial, office, or manufacturing uses. This does not include several unutilized or underutilized commercial, office, or manufacturing facilities, or vacant land under institutional ownership. Given the current population and employment projections, there is likely to be sufficient land for commercial development during the horizon period of this plan. Centers that house much of that vacant land and under-utilized properties are classified as Emerging Centers. These Centers hold great potential to contribute to a Complete, Connected, and Compact community but need additional planning efforts. The following Emerging Centers would greatly benefit from sub-area plans that take into account the nature and character of each, along with their assets and challenges. Centers that could greatly benefit from sub-area planning include:

- 4a. RC3—Mitsubishi/Rivian Area
- 4b. LC9—Fort Jesse/Hershey Area
- 4c. LC5—One Normal Plaza/Route 66

5. Facilitate development in the evolving Centers to transition from the current auto-oriented development model to one that supports a complete, connected, and compact community.

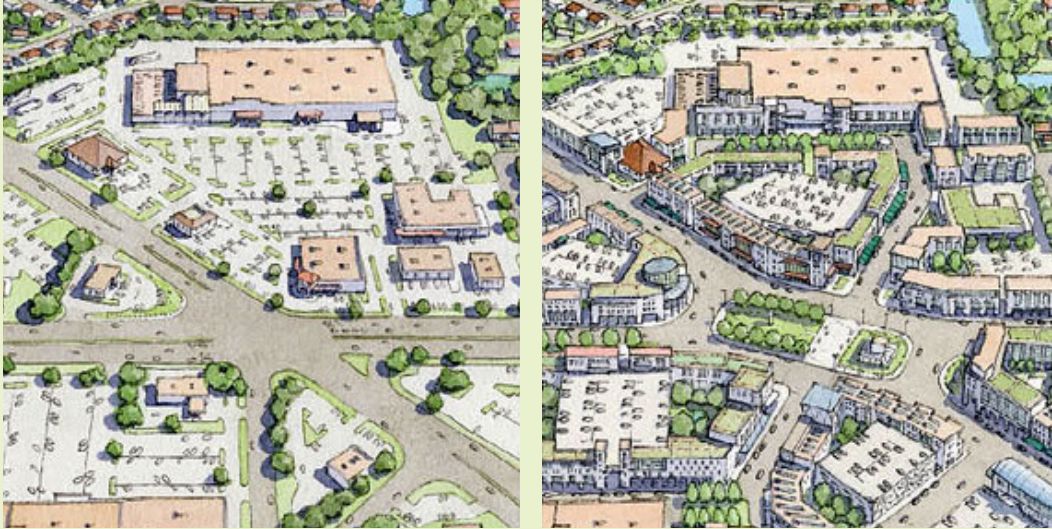
Evolving Centers are those with existing developments that are performing well but have room for improvement. New development or redevelopment here will be incremental, and the Town should be prepared to capitalize on those incremental developments in the following centers.

- 5a. RC1—I55 & I74 Gateway Center
- 5b. RC6—Veterans Parkway Regional Commercial Center
- 5c. LC1—Fairview Park Area
- 5d. LC3—ISU Oriented Retail and Mixed-Use Center
- 5e. LC6—Industrial/Commercial Area along the Railroad
- 5f. LC11—Main and Raab (Gateway Area)

Sprawl Repair Example

“Sprawl repair transforms failing or potentially failing, single-use, and car-dominated developments into complete communities that have better economic, social, and environmental performance.”

—Sprawl repair defined by Galena Tachieva in her book *Sprawl Repair Manual*



Left: Commercial Sprawl, Right: Complete Community; Source: *Sprawl Repair Manual*

When commercial spaces become vacant, the most cost-effective solution is generally to find new commercial occupants that can use them. However, the increase of online sales and other technology advancements are making such smooth transitions difficult. Many communities are thus left to deal with large vacant buildings.

McAllen, Texas provides one example of how to deal with these issues through adaptive reuse. McAllen repurposed a large open building vacated by Walmart into a public library. The new \$25.7 million McAllen Public Library occupies 123,000 square feet on one floor, making it the largest one-story library in the country. *Big Box Reuse*, authored by Julia Christensen, includes this and other examples that show how many communities have addressed this problem, turning vacated “big boxes” into something else: a church, a library, a school, a medical center, a courthouse, a recreation center, a museum, or other more civic-minded structures.



1. Vacated Walmart, 2. & 3. New McAllen Public Library; Source: Alucobond, www.Alucobondusa.com

A photograph of an Amtrak train at a station platform during sunset. The train, with the number 186 and the Amtrak logo on its front, is on the tracks to the left. A man in a suit and a woman with a backpack and suitcase are on the platform to the right, looking towards the train. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light. The word "CORRIDORS" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

CORRIDORS

Corridors serve multiple functions, sometimes within a single location or pathway. All corridors have the basic purpose of connection across the community.

Normal corridors create networks by which people access employment and commercial centers, entertainment and recreational opportunities, and vital services, and by which we protect and enjoy the natural environment within the urban area. They are categorized within three types:

- **Transportation Corridors** are the streets, roads, railroads, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities that physically connect our centers and neighborhoods.
- **Cultural Corridors** are historically and culturally significant pathways, embodied in Normal primarily by Route 66 and the Constitution Trail.
- **Natural Corridors** are the streams, riparian buffers, detention basins, and other natural or quasi-natural areas that serve as wildlife habitats and pathways.

Each corridor is assigned to only one category for simplicity. For example, Constitution Trail is classified as a cultural corridor while it could fit under transportation corridor or natural corridor (as a significant greenway). This section analyzes each of these three sets of corridors as they exist today and provides a common set of recommendations.

Transportation Corridors

Transportation corridors today are overly focused on facilitating the efficient movement of cars, with not enough provision for other modes of transportation. This can be seen in:

- **Urban Sprawl:** Many of our neighborhoods located on the fringes of the community and our Centers designed with too much parking and poor internal circulation, making walking, biking, or transit difficult for most people.
- **Street designs and patterns:** are biased toward wide roads with several traffic lanes and few opportunities to cross safely. Newer parts of town tend to lack an interconnected street grid that would allow efficient multimodal transportation.



Transportation
Corridors

F3.4



Cultural Corridors

F3.12



Natural Corridors

F3.17

The Town must ensure that its transportation corridors permit safe, convenient, and comfortable travel by all users, in all modes of transportation. Where the Town lacks jurisdiction—most notably, in its two primary corridors, Main Street and Veterans Parkway—it should strive to establish a strong partnership with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) in order to meet the goals of this *Plan*.

Cultural Corridors

The Constitution Trail and Rt. 66 are the Town’s primary cultural corridors and are serving as major community attractions, drawing recreational users and even tourists.

The Town should continue to be a key regional partner in expanding the Constitution Trail, highlighting Rt. 66 history locally, and embracing Rt. 66 tourism.

Natural Corridors

Sugar Creek is the Town’s primary natural corridor. A significantly underutilized asset, the creek has been altered by human activity in such a way that it does not meet its potential as an environmental or recreational asset. The Regional Greenways Plan calls for the establishment of a continuous network of natural and manmade corridors, including Sugar Creek and the Constitution Trail, that link parks and natural areas, providing wildlife habitat corridors and enhanced recreational opportunities for area residents.

The Town should continue to implement the recommendations of the Greenways Plan and use green infrastructure practices to maximize the greenway network’s positive environmental impact.

While specific recommendations may differ across categories and specific corridors, it must be stressed that the common theme is connectivity. One of the greatest strengths of the Town of Normal, identified by numerous community members in the Outreach phase of the planning process, is that it combines many of the advantages of a larger city with the feel of a small town. At the core of that sentiment is a feeling of interconnectedness—that even as the Town grows, people still feel connected to their neighbors and can experience all of the Town’s advantages comfortably and conveniently. The long-term trend toward urban sprawl and auto-centric design has made the community less connected. While the Constitution Trail represents a significant achievement, the Town must continue to take deliberate action to preserve our shared history and make Normal’s Rt. 66 a cultural destination. Environmentally sensitive development can re-establish our connection to nature.

METRICS

STREETS

425
Lane Miles of Street

50
Miles of Classified Streets
under the Town's control
(potential Complete Streets)

0.5
Miles of Complete Streets
(Concentrated in Uptown)

SIDEWALKS

200
Miles of Sidewalk

-75%
Streets with Sidewalk
(at least on one side)

TRAIL ACCESS

40%
Parks with Trail Access
(8 parks have direct access
to Constitution Trail)

15%
Schools with Trail Access
(2 schools have direct access
to Constitution Trail)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Related Crashes in Normal



TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS

MAP FC1: Transportation Corridors



Normal's transportation corridors consist of an interwoven network of streets, highways, bicycle and pedestrian routes, railroad lines, transit routes, and other facilities. They provide access for all people throughout the community, specific access to important activity centers, cultural and social resources, and interaction with natural open space both within the Town and beyond.

While specific places such as Neighborhoods and Centers are enmeshed in their immediate surroundings, usually limited to one or two land use types, Corridors are mutable in character as they make their ways through the Town and to destinations, experiences or linkages to other corridors. For example, U.S. 51/Main Street shifts its primary function from its entrance to the Town on the north, through its position as a backbone of the Illinois State University campus and the ISU sports and entertainment venues and then provides access to Advocate BroMenn Campus.

Streets are typically described by their functional classification, a tool developed by the US Department of Transportation. [See Table FC1 for classification descriptions.] This classification is predominantly based on the number of vehicles they carry, the speed at which these vehicles move, and the number of destinations they connect. The majority of Normal's transportation infrastructure is built in conformance with this classification system that favors cars over any other mode of transportation. As a result, with the exception of the Uptown area, **most streets in Normal are far from being complete streets**, as envisioned by this plan.

Overlaid on the street network is the Town’s transit network. This includes fixed routes and bus stops located roughly every quarter-mile.

The Town’s transportation corridors also include railroads. The primary rail corridor in the Town is the Union Pacific line which carries Amtrak service to Uptown Station. Running diagonally through the Town, this rail line also carries substantial freight traffic.

These interwoven transportation corridors are owned and controlled by different public entities. The Town controls most of the minor arterials, major collectors, and local streets; the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) controls the principal arterials and expressways; Connect Transit controls the transit system; and the railroad companies control the railroads. In many instances, the corridors connect Normal to Bloomington and the surrounding rural parts of McLean County. The complexities of the network and ownership demand high levels of cooperation. The Long Range Transportation Plan 2045, BN Mobile, developed concurrently with this plan, addresses regional coordination issues more thoroughly.

The discussion in this section focuses on how the Town can effect change in the transportation corridors within its jurisdiction. Corridors are organized by ownership and control. This section should be read in conjunction with the Transportation section in the Infrastructure Element.

TABLE FC1: Functional Classification, General Characteristics, and Use in Normal

Classification	Characteristics	Local Example
Interstate/ Other Freeways and Expressways	High speed travel with controlled access, no signals, wide lanes; freeways and expressways may have slightly greater direct access	Interstate 55/74 and I-39
Principal Arterials	Provide rapid travel through metro areas, serve major activity centers, connect with interchanges and intersections	Veterans Parkway
Minor Arterials	Serve trips of moderate length within an area, preferably spaced between 1/8 and 1/2 mile apart at lower speeds	Raab Road, College Avenue, Linden Street
Major Collectors	Serves both mobility and land access in higher density areas, providing connections through portions of the city but also direct land access to commercial and residential uses with signalized intersections	Parkside Road, Adelaide Street, School Street, Beech Street
Minor Collectors	Serves mobility and density in lower density areas.	Greenbriar Drive
Local Streets	Provides access to individual properties and uses, generally do not provide through travel	Residential streets

Smart Growth America defines complete streets as follows:

“Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities.”



Uptown Circle, with its combined functions as an intersection and a sustainable central park plaza that fosters public interaction, is a national model for Complete Streets.

Corridors under State (IDOT) control

Two critical corridors for the Town are controlled by the Illinois Department of Transportation: Veterans Parkway and Main Street/U.S. 51.

Veterans Parkway, a six-lane expressway on the east side of both Normal and Bloomington, is now the primary commercial corridor in the urban area. Entered from the Pipeline Road interchange with I-55 at Normal’s northeast corner, Veterans Parkway provides access to numerous highway-oriented businesses, including big-box outlets, restaurants, local- and regional-scale shopping centers, and hotels. It is the most heavily traveled road in the Town of Normal. It provides entry points to the Town at a series of cross-streets, and to Bloomington.

Pedestrians and bicyclists actively avoid Veterans Parkway due to safety concerns. Crossing is not perceived as safe, with the exception of a branch of Constitution Trail that crosses under the highway. It is not useful for public transit routes, and only a small portion of the highway is used for fixed-route public transit service. There is a great need to study this corridor and identify ways to make it less of a barrier, as it is today, and more a part of the community.

Main Street, a four-lane highway, is a critical transportation link between Bloomington and Normal and to other downstate communities (most notably Decatur). Within Bloomington-Normal, it is the lifeline to major institutions of learning, businesses, healthcare facilities, and many social services in the community.

The City, the Town, and several public and private institutional partners along the corridor would benefit from converting this highway to a complete street, allowing for the highest and best use of this corridor. Accordingly, this transportation corridor has been the subject of a number of plans and studies over the last decade. The two most notable ones include Main Street: A Call for Investment (referred to here as the “Main Street Study,” 2007) and the Main Street Transportation Improvement Feasibility Study (2012). The feasibility report concluded that it was both possible and desirable to pursue a restructuring of Main Street as recommended by the Main Street Study, and to incorporate Complete Streets concepts to make this principal corridor more responsive to transit, pedestrians, and bicycle users. In response, the Town of Normal created an optional Main Street Form Based Overlay District to enhance the livability, walkability, and appearance of the Main Street corridor.

In 2016, IDOT, in cooperation with the Town and the City, applied for but was not granted federal TIGER funding to more fully implement the recommendations of the Main Street Study. This plan recognizes the importance of implementing those recommendations and encourages the Town to continue to partner with IDOT to restructure Main Street.

This plan also encourages the Town to investigate the feasibility of jurisdictional transfer, to give the Town more control over this corridor. However, due to the structural challenges of the corridor and the potential costs associated with upgrading and maintaining it, local engineers have expressed concerns with this concept. As outlined in the Executive Summary, the state of the State is dire, and it may be many years, if not decades, before IDOT is able to follow through on the Main Street restructuring project. Given the importance of this corridor to Bloomington-Normal, this approach must not be completely ruled out without further investigation.

Corridors under private or corporate control (Railroads)

The primary rail corridor is the Union Pacific line that traverses the Town from northeast to southwest, which also carries Amtrak passenger service to Uptown Station. Uptown Station is a major passenger station for Amtrak’s high-speed passenger service, scheduled to reduce travel times for destinations such as Chicago, Springfield, and St. Louis. The Long Range Transportation Plan notes potential future use of Uptown Station as a hub for commuter rail linkages to other Central Illinois destinations, and as a station for very high speed passenger rail with service at 200–220 mph.

To reconcile the rail traffic through Uptown Normal with the mixed uses characterizing the area, the Town has requested Uptown be designated as a “Quiet Zone” for rail operations. Such a zone is defined by the Federal Railroad Administration as “[a] section of a rail line at least one-half mile in length that contains one or more consecutive public highway-rail grade crossings at which locomotive horns are not routinely sounded when trains are approaching the crossings.”

The Union Pacific rail line also carries daily freight traffic. On the west side of Normal, the Norfolk Southern rail line serves the Mitsubishi/Rivian manufacturing complex and associated industrial locations (RC3 Center). There is a rail interchange in Bloomington which permits movement of traffic between the Union Pacific and Norfolk Southern lines.

[See the Regional Freight Study for more information on railroads, including recommendations.]

Public Transit operated by Connect Transit

Normal and Bloomington are served by Connect Transit, which is chartered to provide service only in the incorporated areas of the Twin Cities. In recent years, Connect Transit has experienced considerable growth in its ridership. This increase is in part the result of universal access agreements with Illinois State University, Heartland Community College, and Illinois Wesleyan University.

On Connect Transit's fixed-route network, bus stops are located roughly every quarter-mile. Map H1 illustrates each stop location and the intensity of its use. In 2016, Connect Transit implemented changes to its route structure and frequency of service. More frequent service became available on some fixed routes, primarily those that serve the ISU campus, Uptown, and those linking Uptown to downtown Bloomington. Primary transit corridors include Main Street, portions of College Avenue, Linden Street, and streets leading to Uptown Normal.

Connect Transit's challenges include the constant need to upgrade its fleet at great expense. Current local funding levels cannot cover the cost of fleet upgrades and overall operations, and the State of Illinois has proven to be an unreliable source of revenue. Connect Transit expressed that in order for transit to serve the community most effectively, new development must be transit-oriented. This presents the Town with another partner in its efforts to pursue complete, connected, and compact development.

Corridors under control of the Town of Normal

More than 400 lane miles of streets under the Town's control provide connections at all levels of use, from individual houses to institutional campuses. They are designed to maximize the efficiency of vehicular traffic. Some streets fall under a federally defined functional classification system as illustrated in Map FC 1. Retaining the functional classification system permits the use of federal transportation funding, which can be used to improve classified streets. This support for street improvements extends the Town's fiscal capacity to address transportation and other needs. Unclassified streets (also called local streets or residential streets) give access to individual locations, such as those within neighborhoods.

The classified corridors fully controlled by the Town present the greatest opportunity to become complete streets. Several of those corridors, such as Towanda Avenue, Hershey Road and College Avenue, extend into Bloomington's jurisdiction and hence need careful coordination for them to be fully functional complete streets.

Recommendations

1. **Pursue opportunities to implement the recommendations of the Main Street Feasibility Study.**
2. **Partner with IDOT, the City of Bloomington, and the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) to study the Veterans Parkway corridor.**
3. **Focus efforts on Transit Oriented Development**

3a. Partner with Connect Transit to establish transit-supportive residential densities. Table FC2 provides examples of such density guidelines from other major cities. Given the sizes of these cities and the types of transit available, these guidelines do not apply to a smaller community like Normal but serve as a model to be scaled to Bloomington-Normal. It is important to work with Connect Transit and MCRPC to establish transit-supportive residential densities for Bloomington-Normal. Ideally, such work should result in density and design guidelines for residential and commercial developments along high-frequency fixed transit routes, with different guidelines for a) 15-minute or better service areas and b) 30-minute or better service areas.

[See Housing Element, Infrastructure & Public Safety Element, and LRTP for additional recommendations]

TABLE FC2: Sample of Gross Residential Densities from Station Area Planning Guidelines

	Urban Core (Downtown)	City Center	Suburban Center
Metropolitan Transportation Commission (Bay Area) Station Area Planning Manual	16-60 du/acre	10-30 du/acre	5-20 du/acre
City of San Diego TOD Guidelines		17-30 du/acre (avg) 12 du/acre (min)	13-20 du/acre (avg) 8 du/acre (min)
Sacramento Regional Transit Guide to TOD	36 du/acre (min)	1/4 mile: 20 du/acre (min) 1/4 mile: 15 du/acre (min)	1/4 mile: 15 du/acre (min) 1/4 mile: 10 du/acre (min)
City of Charlotte (standards for light rail)		25 (min)	25 (min)

Note: San Diego's TOD Design Guidelines provide net densities; they have been converted to gross densities using an average gross-to-net ratio of 0.67.

4. Codify the Complete Streets policy adopted by the Council in 2017.

Town staff should establish design guidelines for implementation of the Complete Streets Policy, and should use those standards for the redesign of existing corridors and design of new corridors. Having clear guidelines for various street types such as arterials, collectors, and local streets will help with effective implementation of the Complete Streets Policy. Given the number of streets that connect Normal to Bloomington and beyond, establishing these guidelines at the regional level in coordination with the City of Bloomington would help create a cohesive network of complete streets in the community. Until such codes are established the Town should use the guidance provided in the Design Expectations callout box and other resources identified in the Complete Streets Policy to achieve Complete Streets.

Example: **Woodbury, Minnesota** adopted a Complete Streets policy following a recommendation of their long-range transportation policy in 2008. Immediately after adoption of the policy, Woodbury established an interdisciplinary Task Force of city administrators, planners, engineers, environmentalists, parks and recreation staff, and safety professionals, to create design templates for roadway corridors using complete streets principles.

This Task Force developed 12 design templates for different types of roadway corridors, ranging from 180-foot-wide highways carrying high volumes of traffic at high speeds to 28-foot-wide residential streets with sidewalks on one or two sides. Specific guidelines for roadway elements such as driving lanes, medians, shoulders, turn lanes, bike and pedestrian facilities, transit lanes, boulevards, utility areas, and landscaping were included in each of the templates. In developing these guidelines, the Task Force used four key design principles of safety, mobility, sustainability, and livability.

Woodbury compared its existing design standards to the proposed templates, which resulted in many amendments to its standards.

5. Establish a multimodal Level of Service (LOS).

According to the Highway Capacity Manual, LOS is a quantitative stratification of a performance measure or measures that represent quality of service, measured on an A to F scale, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions from the traveler's perspective and LOS F the worse. Typically LOS computations only consider quality of service for cars. This plan recommends establishing multimodal LOS for accurate evaluation of the Town's transportation corridors.

Design Expectations For Transportation Corridors

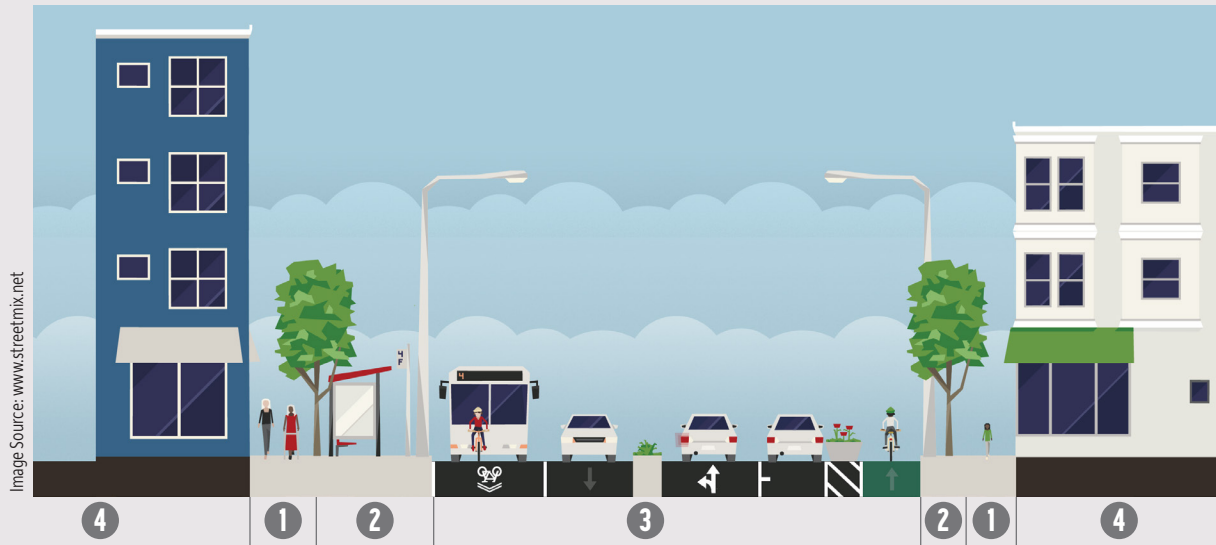
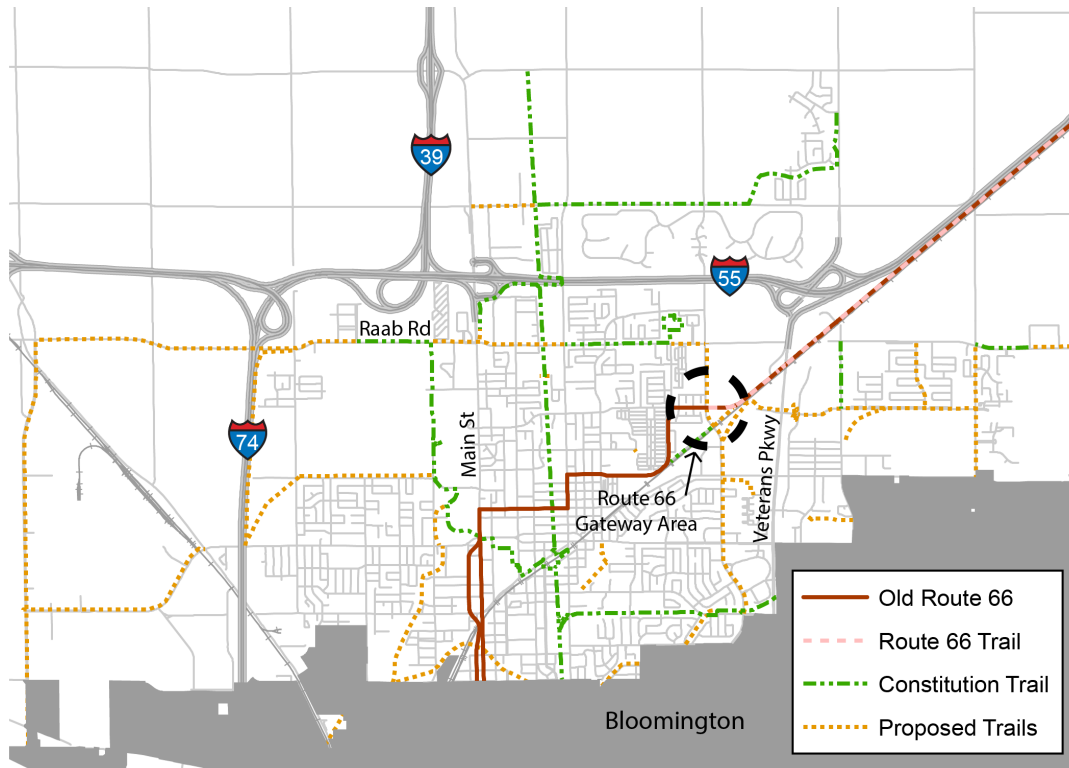


Image Source: www.streetmix.net

1. **Pedestrian Clearway:** This zone is the portion of the sidewalk dedicated expressly to walking. The defined area must remain clear, both horizontally and vertically, for the movement of pedestrians. Materials should be smooth for wheel chair movement yet provide grip.
2. **Landscape and Street Furnishing Zone:** This zone should contain landscaping and hard furnishings that protect the pedestrian clearway from traffic. Landscaping selection should help curb stormwater runoff with elements such as bioswales, planters, rain gardens, and street trees. Such elements are beneficial for aesthetics, mobility, and ecology; lighting and signage should be human scaled; hard furnishings such as benches, art work and bicycle parking should enhance the pedestrian and bicycle environment.
3. **Roadway:** This zone should safely and comfortably accommodate all users regardless of their travel mode of choice. This zone should include:
 - **Driving lanes:** Conventional driving lanes are designed for safe driving at or slightly above the posted speed limits. Calming the traffic on these lanes is crucial for accommodating all modes within the roadway. Simple traffic calming measures like restriping to narrow travel lanes and provide more room for bicycles and/or pedestrians; changing signal timing and adding pedestrian countdown signals; installing refuge islands, medians, and curb extensions; installing temporary curbside plazas;
 - **Bicycling facilities** such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, shared bicycle/parking lanes or bicycle/transit lanes. Bicycle blocks at the head of a traffic lane at a signalized intersection provide bicyclists with a safe and visible way to get ahead of queuing traffic during the red signal phase;
 - **Transit stops** should be designed to discourage traffic conflicts and encourage pedestrian and bicycle connections;
 - **Medians/Boulevards:** Medians are areas within a roadway that separate opposing lanes of traffic. These areas can also act as pedestrian islands and could feature decorative and sustainable landscaping, trees that provide shade and reduce the heat island effect and other environmental benefits. In some designs, medians can also help to decrease vehicle speeds to the desired level;
 - **Intersection** design and material selection should minimize conflict among various modes and enhance accessibility for all users.
4. **Context Sensitive Solution (CSS):** Planning and designing streets, roads and highways should always be sensitive to the communities and land uses through which they travel.

CULTURAL CORRIDORS

MAP FC2: Cultural Corridors



Old Route 66

Cultural corridors are districts or routes that also serve as cohesive and dynamic public places with cultural and/or historic significance. They are special corridors, deserving of acknowledgment for their role in forming a community's identity. They add to a community's uniqueness, occupying local history and contributing to local culture, and can also become significant tourism generators. In Normal, two primary cultural corridors exist: Old Route 66 and the Constitution Trail.

Route 66 was one of the original highways of the US Highway System. It began in Chicago, Illinois and went west to Santa Monica, California, passing through Normal and Bloomington on its way to St. Louis, Missouri. It is acknowledged as one of the most famous roads in the country's history and played a vital role in westward migrations during the 1930s. With the creation of the Interstate Highway System in 1956, Route 66 was slowly replaced by new interstates and eventually removed from the US Highway System in 1985. However, many communities along its route have kept the spirit alive by honoring and celebrating its historic significance.

In Normal today, a number of historic assets exist along Old Route 66. Most notable is Sprague’s Super Service on Pine Street—a unique gas station with a residence above it. Sprague’s opened in 1931, went through several business changes over the years, and eventually fell into disrepair; however, the building was recently renovated and is now home to a Route 66 Visitor Center. Several other buildings on Pine Street also date back to the early 1900s. One Normal Plaza, including the historic Illinois Soldiers and Sailors Children’s School buildings and surrounding parkland, is directly along Old Route 66, as is ISU’s campus. The first Steak ‘n Shake restaurant opened in 1934 on Main Street at the intersection with West Virginia Avenue; the building is now occupied by Monical’s Pizza.

Several relatively new assets include Uptown and the Route 66 Trail. Uptown, while not directly along Old Route 66, is worth mentioning due to its cultural significance as the Town’s center. The Route 66 Trail enters Normal from the northeast alongside the Old US Route 66 roadway and creates a multimodal gateway into the Town.



Sprague’s Super Service (305 E. Pine Street)

Constitution Trail

Repurposing about 4.5 miles of an abandoned Illinois Central Gulf Railroad corridor between Bloomington and Normal, the original segment of the Constitution Trail was dedicated and named on September 17, 1987 in honor of the 200th birthday of the US Constitution. It officially opened on May 6, 1989. In 2000, the Trail was designated as a Millennium Trail by the White House Millennium Council as part of its “Millennium Trails: Connecting America’s Communities” initiative.

Expansions of the Trail have occurred since it opened, with today’s Trail covering over 45 miles throughout Bloomington and Normal and connecting many neighborhoods and centers. Destinations along the Trail include Heartland Community College, the Corn Crib, ISU, Uptown Normal, Connie Link Amphitheatre, and a number of schools and parks. Benches, water fountains, bathrooms, bike repair stations, and bike parking line the Trail at various points; educational signage is also scattered along the trail, honoring the US Constitution and celebrating the history of the rail corridor. The recent introduction of a bike share system to Bloomington-Normal installed the vast majority of its stations near Constitution Trail. Camelback Bridge, a wooden bridge that crosses the Trail at West Virginia Avenue, is on the US National Register of Historic Places for its use of the patented Phoenix support columns.

Currently the Trail is seen as a linear park and is primarily used for recreation; however, as both Bloomington and Normal work to implement further trail expansions and on-street bicycle infrastructure it will likely be seen as a viable transportation corridor as well.



Recommendations

1. Utilize art as a means to define cultural corridors.

- 1a. Design infrastructure along cultural corridors in a manner that promotes their character and theme.

Infrastructure can include a variety of elements; examples include benches, tables, street lights, signage, and shelters. Incorporating creative design into infrastructure can add to the cultural attractiveness of an area by giving it a unique environment.

- 1b. Partner with institutions, businesses, and others located along cultural corridors to promote placemaking.

[See the Community Identity & Public Places Element for more detail.]



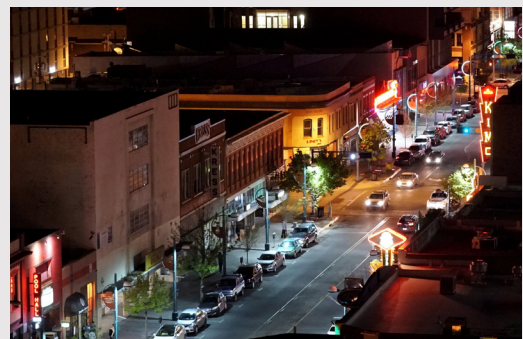
- 1. The unique street lights of the Serenbe village in Chattahoochee, GA. Image Source: Robinson Iron
- 2. A fire hydrant in Springfield, IL was painted with a Route 66 theme. Image Source: Rt. 66 Hydrant Mural Project
- 3. A painted trail, part of a broader arts exhibit along the trail, in Hopkinton, MA. Image Source: Hopkinton Center for the Arts
- 4. The iconic Route 66 gateway mural in Pontiac, IL. Image Source: Flickr user Anna Harris

2. Ensure future development along cultural corridors is sensitive to the character and history of the corridors.

- 2a. Consider partnering with the City of Bloomington to implement a neon sign design overlay zone along the Old Route 66 corridor.

Central Avenue Neon Design Overlay Zone in Albuquerque, New Mexico

In 2013, the City of Albuquerque introduced a neon design overlay zone for development along its Central Avenue as part of a larger Route 66 Action Plan. Central Avenue is the longest urbanized stretch of Route 66 in the country. The design overlay zone was established to encourage the use of neon signs to develop a neon theme along the corridor and facilitate destination tourism associated with Route 66. Neon signs were first developed around the same time that Route 66 gained popularity, resulting in the proliferation of the signs along the highway as businesses sprang up. The setting and atmosphere created by the signs became very iconic of that period in history.



Albuquerque's Central Avenue at night; Source: Flickr user tamarepus

2b. Improve Normal's Old Route 66 gateway at the intersection of Shelbourne Drive and Towanda Avenue.

The gateway is currently quite informal and unremarkable, thus any improvements should aim to first identify the location as a gateway, and second beautify the area in a manner that is fitting with Route 66 characteristics and iconic themes.

2c. Continue expanding Constitution Trail along proposed routes [See Map FC2] and connect it to the Route 66 Trail.

2d. Encourage trail-oriented development along and near trails.

Trail-oriented developments are intentionally designed to facilitate the use of adjacent or nearby trails and accommodate trail users. They view trails as important transportation corridors and prioritize density and a mix of uses along them. Active modes of transportation are heavily encouraged, resulting in minimal amounts of parking offered.

Example: The Flats At Bethesda Avenue (Bethesda, Maryland)



Image Source: Urban Land Institute

Apartments above help boost density in the area.

Retail and other commercial uses on the first floor have frontage along the trail.

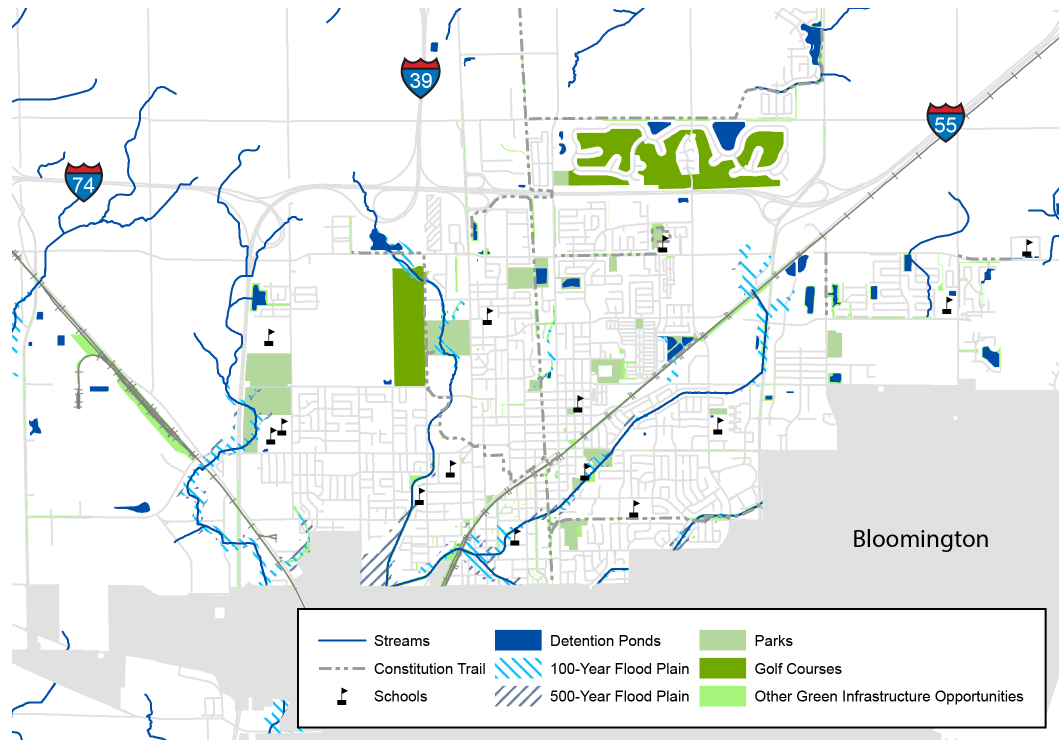
The trail is clearly delineated from the sidewalk.

Building setback is close to the trail.

Benches, planters, and lamps create a transition zone between sidewalk and trail.

NATURAL CORRIDORS

MAP FC3: Natural Corridors



Natural corridors, or greenways, are the streams, riparian buffers, parks, detention basins, and other natural or quasi-natural areas that serve as urban wildlife habitats and pathways while also serving a recreational purpose. Map FC 3 shows these areas, many of which can be connected to the broader regional greenway system via existing and future corridors such as the Constitution Trail and the planned Sugar Creek trail. Creating a continuous regional greenway network is a long-established goal that is formalized in the Regional Greenways Plan, which was adopted 1997 by the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County, and updated in 2009.

Sugar Creek is the Town of Normal's most important urban watershed, and an integral part of the Natural Corridors system.

Significant stretches of Sugar Creek pass through Normal, primarily in the public right-of-way. Like many urban streams, Sugar Creek has been modified in a number of ways to accommodate growth. These modifications, including channelization and concrete beds and banks, have compromised the creek's ability to be hospitable to wildlife. Prior to the adoption of the Town's Stream Buffer Ordinance in 2008, development was allowed to encroach on the riparian area, making it impossible to let the creek follow its natural course. The creek is also subject to the effects of stormwater runoff, which is intensified in urban areas due to impervious surfaces (concrete, asphalt, etc.). This stormwater comes into contact with road salt, fertilizer, and other substances, carrying harmful chemicals into the creek. This pollution—which is, to some degree, an unavoidable consequence

of modern living, but can also be reduced through best management practices—has significant local and downstream effects on water quality.

In addition to its environmental importance, Sugar Creek is a potential recreational asset. The creek offers a number of potential linkages with the Constitution Trail and other greenway assets such as detention basins. Because of its geographic reach in the urban area and its unrealized potential as a natural resource, Sugar Creek has been recognized as a key natural corridor in a number of past planning efforts. It was identified as a priority greenway in the Greenways Plan, with an eye toward protecting the riparian area from urban runoff and constructing a Sugar Creek trail that would enhance the Constitution Trail network.

Despite this priority designation, most of these enhancements have not been carried out. Much of the right-of-way that would be required to implement a Sugar Creek greenway is owned by the Bloomington and Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD), which has expressed reservations about placing trails in certain areas due to liability concerns and the presence of its infrastructure. Any development of this greenway will thus require substantial intergovernmental coordination. Other development considerations include neighborhood privacy, flooding concerns, steep slopes, physical barriers such as bridges, and established development that has encroached on the riparian area.

None of these are necessarily insurmountable obstacles. BNWRD's record of environmental stewardship should make it an excellent partner in deciding the best way to integrate Sugar Creek with the rest of the greenway network, improving water quality without compromising safety or critical infrastructure. Privacy concerns are often expressed by residents prior to trail development—this has been the case, for example, for various segments of the Constitution Trail—but these concerns typically fade away as the benefits of the trail become more clear. As for flooding concerns, avoiding rigid channelization and concrete beds can actually reduce flood risk by slowing the flow of water during heavy storms. Other engineering issues should be examined on a case-by-case basis to determine whether they can feasibly be resolved.

Even if it proves infeasible to build the entire Sugar Creek greenway, incremental development of the trail—along the lines of what has been done with the Constitution Trail—could move the ball forward. A short trail segment along the creek could, for example, give residents of the Cedar Crest/Highland area (the neighborhood coded “Old3” in the Neighborhoods Chapter of the Planning Framework) better access to the Constitution Trail and Underwood Park. Similar examples can be found throughout the Town's neighborhoods and centers.

Other (non-natural) corridors in the greenway network

The greenway system within the urban area also includes the Constitution Trail and pedestrian- and bike-friendly streets. These are more for the benefit of people than wildlife, and thus cannot be designated as natural corridors (although the Constitution Trail, which is lined with trees and other vegetation for much of its length, may be considered a quasi-natural corridor). Still, these corridors are important in fulfilling the recreational purpose of the greenway network, and should be considered along with the Sugar Creek greenway as links in the overall chain.

Nodes on the greenway network: Detention basins, parks, and other green spaces

The greenway network is not only composed of linear features; it also includes a number of green spaces that can serve as waypoints or destinations. These are not, strictly speaking, corridors, but are more like nodes linked by greenway segments. Aside from the Sugar Creek right-of-way and floodplain, these encompass all of Normal's parks, detention basins, and green spaces, whether owned by the Town itself or by BNWRD, ISU, or Unit 5. Private landholders, including railroads and commercial and residential owners, also own land that could be improved using green infrastructure practices, providing aesthetic, recreational, and environmental benefits.

The easiest of these areas to improve will be those owned by the Town of Normal. As with Sugar Creek, the Town will have to establish partnerships with other owners to improve the green spaces not under its own control.

Town of Normal Stream Buffer Ordinance

Town of Normal adopted a Stream Buffer Ordinance to protect riparian buffers, wetlands and other critical areas. This ordinance established minimum widths of buffers based on the stream order (shown below) and provided specifications for the establishment, protection and maintenance of vegetation along all stream systems. It further established acceptable requirements for the design of these buffers to protect critical environmental and land resources, water quality, and riparian and aquatic ecosystems.

Stream Order 1

10 feet from the centerline on each side.

Stream Order 2

25 feet from the centerline on each side.

Stream Order 3

50 feet on each side of the stream bank of the active channel and floodway.

Stream Order 4

100 feet on each side of the stream bank of the active channel and floodway.

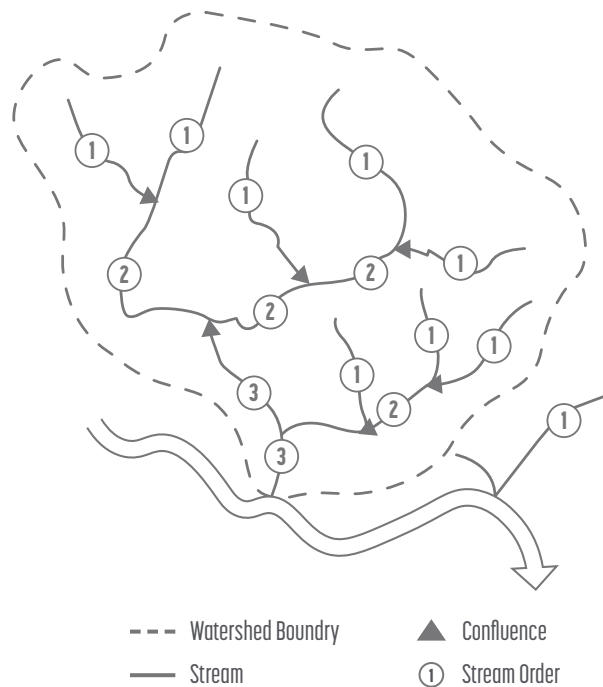
Stream Order 5

100 feet on each side of the stream bank of the active channel and floodway.

Stream Order 6

100 feet on each side of the stream bank of the active channel and floodway.

The ordinance modifies the width requirements for steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands, and other environmentally critical areas.



Recommendations

1. Monitor, protect, and restore Town waterways and watersheds, and support broader regional watershed protection.

- 1a. Maintain an active role in the Greenways Advisory Committee and the Watershed Management Oversight Committee, which monitor and coordinate watershed protection and restoration activities.
- 1b. Continue to invest in stream restoration and bank stabilization projects along Sugar Creek as called for in the Town's five-year Community Investment Plan (CIP).
- 1c. Use a mix of regulations, incentives, and education programs to encourage best practices in the Conservation Zones, which include riparian buffers, floodplains, and other ecologically sensitive and valuable areas.

[See Health & Sustainability Element Goal HS2 for a list of partners to help implement these practices.]
- 1d. Evaluate opportunities to reduce the use of road salt, fertilizer, and other chemicals that enter local streams through stormwater runoff (or groundwater through infiltration).

2. Identify opportunities for green infrastructure projects throughout Normal ***[See Map FC3 Natural Corridors].***

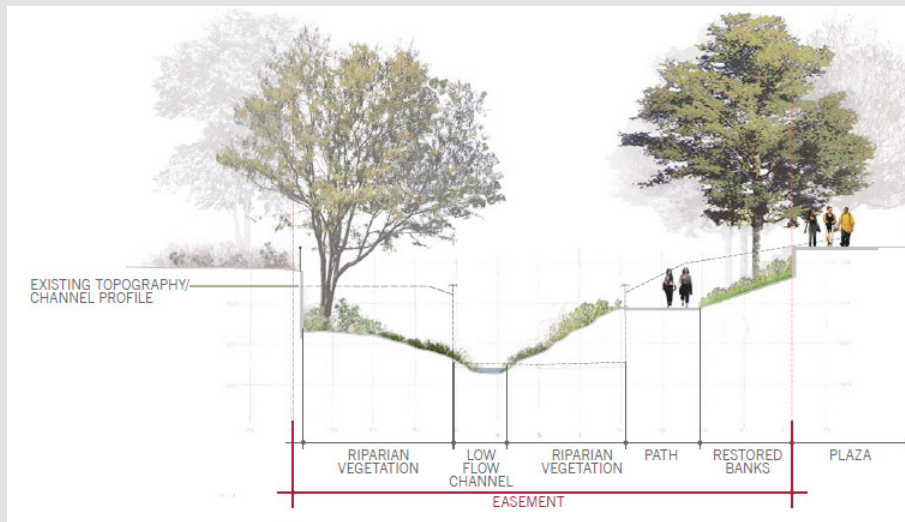
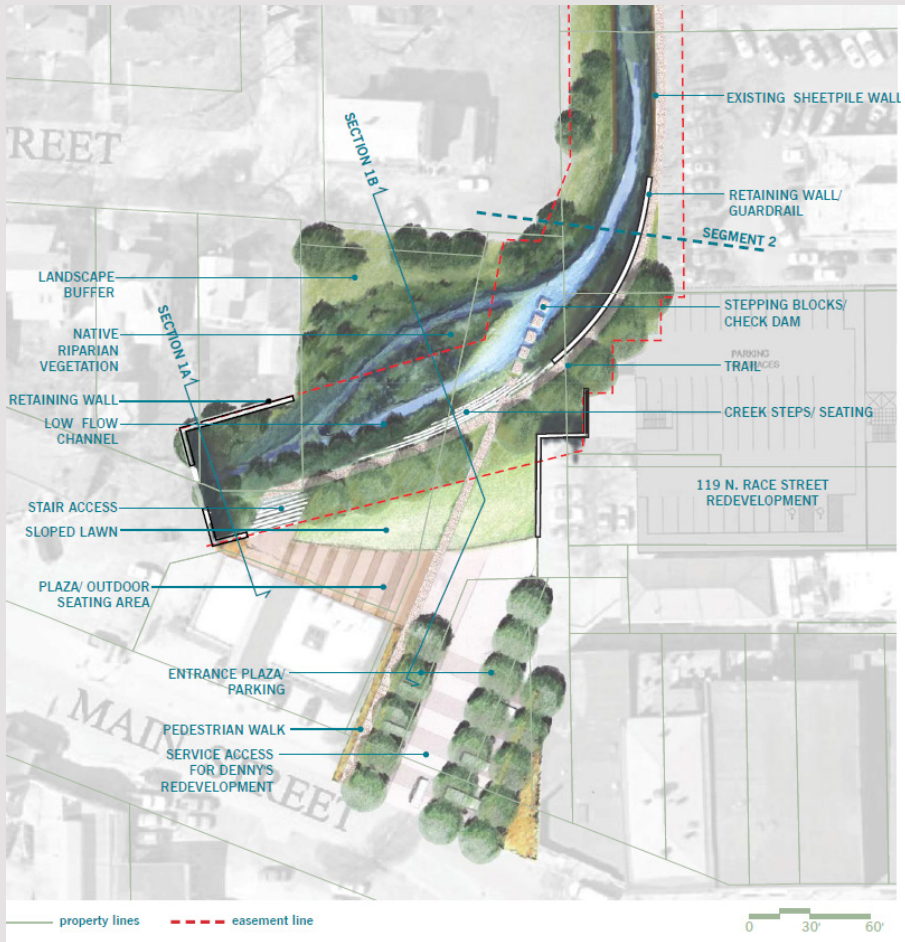
- 2a. Establish demonstration sites for green technologies and sustainable development.
- 2b. Work closely with IDOT, railroads, BNWRD, and other entities with land in the public ROW to implement these recommendations where the Town does not have the ROW.
- 2c. Prioritize such improvements—particularly with respect to the tree canopy—along high-priority bicycle and pedestrian routes.

3. Enhance bicycle and pedestrian linkages by providing connections along Sugar Creek between multiple neighborhoods, maintaining a continuous path while minimizing roadway crossings.

- 4. Strive to make a net positive impact on the natural environment through Normal's parks.**
- 4a. Perform a baseline analysis of the environmental sustainability of the Town's parks and recreation facilities. (Q)
 - 4b. Expand areas with native plantings, minimal mowing, and no/low chemical use, particularly along waterways. (Q)
 - 4c. Protect (and where appropriate, create) wildlife and pollinator habitat areas and other sensitive environmental areas within park boundaries.
 - 4d. Consider seeking Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program certification for Ironwood Golf Course to guide development and maintenance practices. (Q)
 - 4e. Explore the possibility of on-site renewable energy generation in parks.
 - 4f. Consider expanding the use of park land for food production.
- 5. Support regional trail projects that connect to the Town's own natural corridors and the Constitution Trail.**



Design Expectations For Natural Corridors



Example and Image Source: Boneyard Creek Restoration Project in Champaign, Illinois

A photograph of a playground with a green tint. In the foreground, there is a metal bench with a lattice backrest. Behind it is a large, multi-level play structure with slides and climbing areas. The ground is covered in wood chips. The text "LAND USE & IMPLEMENTATION" is overlaid in the center in white, bold, sans-serif font.

LAND USE & IMPLEMENTATION

The land use plan takes the goals expressed for many aspects of the Town’s future and assigns them a physical place in the community.

The purpose of the new approach to land use planning expounded in this document is to promote growth and development that is consistent with the Vision and core values. By using an intuitive place type analysis structured around neighborhoods, centers, and corridors, and focusing as much on existing places as areas for future expansion, the Planning Framework provides a flexible model for place-based planning and encourages development that is **complete, connected, and compact**.

Other chapters in the Planning Framework section explain the Place Type classification scheme and provide policy recommendations for each place type. This chapter brings these pieces together with the goals established in the Elements and shows their implications for land use in the Town of Normal.

The land use plan directs the implementation of the goals of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Specifically, it takes the goals expressed for many aspects of the Town’s future, as laid out in the Elements and assigns them a physical place in the community and a place in time as anticipated growth occurs. It provides land use guidelines for different types of places; maps the Town’s neighborhoods, centers, and corridors; and defines growth prioritization criteria..

As is true of the *Comprehensive Plan* itself, the land use plan is advisory in nature, providing principles for Town staff, boards and commissions, and the Town Council to follow in considering and approving development proposals, as well as changes to the Town’s infrastructure and facilities which the Town itself initiates. It is not intended to give detailed instructions for the specific use of every parcel of land in or added to Normal over the next twenty years. That function is fulfilled by the Town ordinances and policies, identified in Table FL 2.

Land Use Guidelines

Each of the Place Types identified in the Planning Framework—six Neighborhood types, four Center types, and three Corridor types—has common threads that hold it together and favor certain types of uses. Together Map FL 1 and Table FL1 shows the boundaries each Neighborhood or Center type and provides “rules of thumb” about the kinds of uses that should be considered allowed, encouraged, discouraged, and context-sensitive within that type. Corridors are excluded because a single corridor can vary widely in form and function as it passes through different locations. The scope of this planning process did not allow for detailed land use analysis along the corridors. Existing corridor plans such as the Main Street Study should be consulted for specific guidance along Main Street. The *Comprehensive Plan* recognizes the need for additional corridor planning, such as along Veterans Parkway, for detailed land use guidance.

Old Neighborhoods and Early Suburban Neighborhoods: Because these neighborhoods are already established, care should be taken to only allow and encourage uses that complement existing assets. This is especially true in the Old Neighborhoods due to their historic qualities. As these low-density neighborhoods, popular with seniors and families with children, continue to be desirable due to their proximity to Uptown Normal and other core Centers, the Town should encourage careful, incremental increases in residential density in areas adjacent to Centers without disrupting these communities. Higher-density residential and innovative housing models such as cottages and mixed-use development, as well as neighborhood-oriented commercial development and community facilities such as churches and other religious institutions, should be considered on a case-by-case basis to ensure that they are consistent with the neighborhood character while furthering the overall goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

New Suburban/Future Neighborhoods: For existing, New Suburban Neighborhoods, the recommendations are much the same as for the Old and Early Suburban Neighborhoods. However, many of them are still unfinished, with a great deal of vacant land that holds potential to avoid, or at least mitigate, some of the mistakes that were made in these areas.

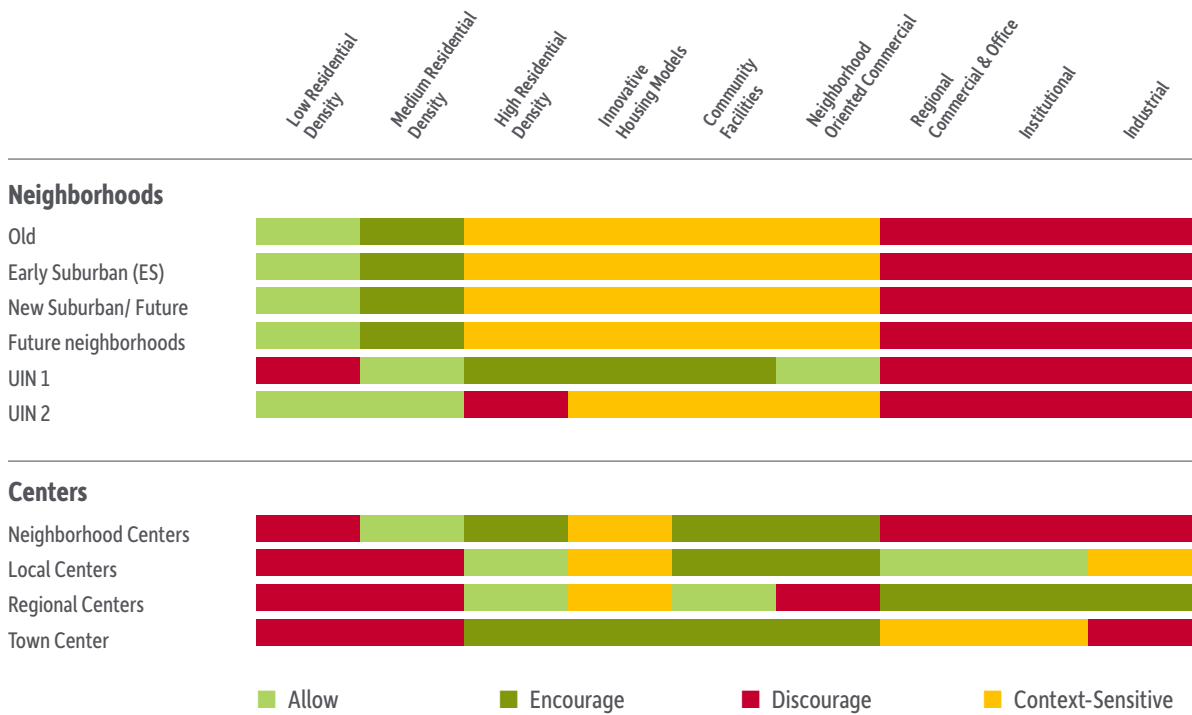
For those areas that are still a blank canvas, Future Neighborhoods, the Town should encourage a diverse mix of residential types and densities, innovative housing models, and integration with community facilities. Where appropriate, it should also allow neighborhood-oriented commercial development to make these and the surrounding New Suburban Neighborhoods more complete.

Neighborhood Centers: Neighborhood centers can only thrive when surrounded by sufficient residential densities to support them. For that reason, the Town should encourage high-density residential development in and around neighborhood centers (or potential neighborhood centers). Because of their close proximity to residential areas, neighborhood centers should not include larger-scale commercial and office spaces, large institutional spaces, or industrial uses.

Local Centers: While local centers may include and even benefit from some residential uses (particularly apartment complexes and mixed-use developments), their primary purpose is to serve as activity hubs and destinations for the entire community. The Town should encourage the location of civic and medium-scale commercial (larger than in neighborhood centers but smaller than in regional centers) uses in local centers. Larger commercial, office, institutional, and even (in certain contexts) light industrial uses may also be appropriate, depending on the specific center.

Regional Centers: Regional centers should be dedicated for regional-scale commercial/office, institutional, and heavier industrial land uses. Some degree of high-density residential development may be permitted where appropriate.

TABLE FL1: Land Use Guidelines



Definitions

Allow: Permit by right, but prioritize encouraged uses

Encourage: Permit by right, and incentivize/promote where necessary

Discourage: Do not allow barring extraordinary extenuating circumstances

Context-sensitive: Allow/encourage if complementary to surrounding uses

Low Density: Less than 6 dwelling unit dwelling units per acre (DU/acre). Typically include large single-family detached.

Medium Density: 6 to 35 DU/acre. Small single-family detached, single-family attached (duplexes, row-houses, condominiums). The upper residential density limit is as suggested by the missingmiddlehousing.com.

High Density: 20 to 80 DU/acre. Multifamily apartment complexes.

Innovative Housing Models: These include (but are not limited to) mixed-use development with residential, live/work, cottage units, supportive housing, assisted living, ADU's, or other housing models beyond standard single- and multifamily housing.

Community Facilities: Parks, plazas, schools, religious institutions, fire stations and other facilities that foster community interactions.

Neighborhood Oriented Commercial: Corner grocers, cafes, restaurants, daycare facilities, banks, dry cleaners, bakeries, small offices, etc.

Regional Commercial/Office: Large shopping centers, large retail establishments, multiplex movie theaters, office complexes, and other destinations intended to draw customers from beyond the community.

Institutional: Major institutional uses such as educational institutions, Town offices, and large medical facilities (hospitals, medical office clusters, etc.).

Industrial: Light industrial uses such as light manufacturing, food processing and distribution, intense commercial service use, and storage facilities are more appropriate for local centers. Heavy industrial such as large-scale manufacturing facilities are more appropriate for regional centers.

TABLE FL2: Tools for Implementation

Legal Tools	
Zoning Ordinance	A zoning ordinance controls the use of land and is an effective means of supplementing a community's land use plan. Zoning decisions can be more defensible if based on the plan.
Overlay Districts	Overlay districts prescribe requirements that are in addition to or supercede those of the zoning ordinance for certain areas or uses. These districts are intended to create, preserve, or enhance selected features such as architectural or historic features.
Subdivision Regulations	These regulations require coordination of new street and other physical improvements to land with an existing or planned street system and provide standards for a lot layout and street design. Subdivision regulations also require adequate street rights of way and alignment of collector streets in conformance with the transportation plan. They also require drainage facilities and easements where necessary and the installation of utilities to serve new areas of development. Also included in subdivision ordinances may be provisions for planned unit developments and for dedication for community facilities.
Codes	Codes provide sound standards for the construction, use, and occupancy of buildings.
Financial Tools	
Capital Improvement Programs	The capital improvements program includes a list of capital projects on a priority basis scheduled for a defined period of time (usually about six years). These programs usually include an estimate of the costs and funding sources for each project.
Federal/State Aid Programs	These programs provide technical and financial assistance for communities to help solve physical, economic and social problems. Competition for these monies is high.
Tax Increment Financing	Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a strategy that allows improvements to be financed by bonds to be retired from revenue-generated from the increase in property taxes that result from the improvements made within the TIF district.
Administrative Tools	
Annexation	This allows for control over outward growth and growth that should not be impeded. Annexation policies should depend on the extent to which the municipality is prepared to extend streets and utilities and other urban services. These policies should be established by what type of capital improvement program is in place. Pre-annexation agreements are standard requirements for zoning approval and utility extension in developing areas of the City.
Intergovernmental Coordination	Improvement programs and land development proposals should be reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. When possible, land development proposals should complement plans of neighboring communities and townships, government taxing bodies, as well as other governmental and non-governmental entities, including the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Commerce Commission, Illinois State University, Heartland Community College, BroMenn Regional Medical Center, and Parklands Foundation. This helps ensure order and mutual compatibility and efficiency in resource allocations.
Programs for Public Understanding and Support	
Progress Reports	Yearly reports outlining what improvements have been made and are scheduled to be made according to the plan.
Summary Report	Preparation and community-wide distribution of summary reports outlining the important parts of the plan.
Planning Tools	
Target Area Plans	Target area plans identify areas for more detailed planning and capital improvements

Growth Priorities

One of the chief functions of a land use plan is to determine where growth should occur, using a consistent and easily understood set of criteria. Below are the growth prioritization criteria developed for this plan. Map FL2 shows the result of the application of those criteria to developable land in and around the Town of Normal.

Tier 1 (highest priority) includes (a) annexed land, with development/redevelopment potential; (b) unincorporated land surrounded by incorporated areas with access to all Town infrastructure; and (c) vacant and under-utilized sites within the corporate limits, as of plan publication.

- There are approximately 1,600 acres of vacant land (excluding ISU property on Gregory Street) and 800 acres of unincorporated land with access to Town infrastructure. Acres for redevelopment are not computed.

Tier 2 includes land immediately adjacent to the incorporated area with access to existing Town infrastructure. Developers may still need to invest to develop these areas.

- Approximately 350 acres meet these criteria.

Tier 3 (lowest priority) consists of greenfield sites, not yet annexed but contiguous to the current corporate limits, which cannot be served until at least one major infrastructure system, owned and operated by the Town, is extended.

- Approximately 1,000 acres meet these criteria.

Future (no growth anticipated)—This category includes greenfield sites, not yet annexed nor contiguous to the current corporate limits, where several major infrastructure systems must be extended. No growth is anticipated during the horizon period of this plan.

Notes:

- Land was assigned to the tiers described below based on conditions at time of publication. These assignments are subject to change as development and redevelopment occur. A major development proposal that triggered a substantial change in the economic circumstances of the community would likely prompt a re-examination of growth priorities and possible amendment to the Growth Tiers Map (Map FL 2).
- Growth Tiers are mapped based on the information available in GIS and in consultation with Town staff at the time of this publication. Growth Tier criteria supersede the map, should there be any discrepancy.
- Analysis of historical growth patterns and population projections indicate that there is sufficient land designated for growth. See Table FL 2.

TABLE FL3: Historical Growth Patterns

	Square Miles	Growth in Square Miles	Growth in Acres
1970	7.4		
1980	9.0	1.6	1,024
1990	11.9	2.9	1,856
2000	15.2	3.3	2,112
2010	18.3	3.1	1,984

Implementation

This Plan provides a platform for moving forward. It clearly defines where we are today and where we want to go. It provides policies and actions for each Element and Place Type based on the shared vision and the core values of the community. Now, it is time for us, the Town and all of its partners, to work collaboratively to make the plan a reality. This entails the following general steps:

Prioritize and Act

This long-range plan, with a 20-year horizon period, contains a number of transformational ideas for Normal. Not all can be implemented at once. While the plan makes every effort to prioritize geographies and identify actions that can be quick wins, scarce resources and unforeseen circumstances will inevitably force some level of triage. This plan recommends that the Town staff further identify key projects that can be executed successfully within the next one to five years (prior to the next update cycle). The Town should integrate those projects into its strategic planning, budgeting, and capital improvement planning processes.

Collaborate

The vision and aspirations of this plan are far bigger and deeper than what a single department or even the Town government can accomplish alone. The Town should invite everyone—other public agencies, educational institutions, not-for-profit organizations, private sector, and citizens who participated in shaping this—to be partners in realizing the plan. The quality of place fostered by the plan will be critical to the success of regional economic development efforts like BN Advantage that are currently underway.

Align regulations and incentives

Many of the plan's goals and objectives are future-focused. Inherently, some of these goals conflict with the Town's existing regulations, which are established based on past practices and experiences. Supporting this plan with updated regulations is critical. These regulations must be paired with incentives such as grants, loans, or place-based investments to move the goals forward.

Look to peer cities

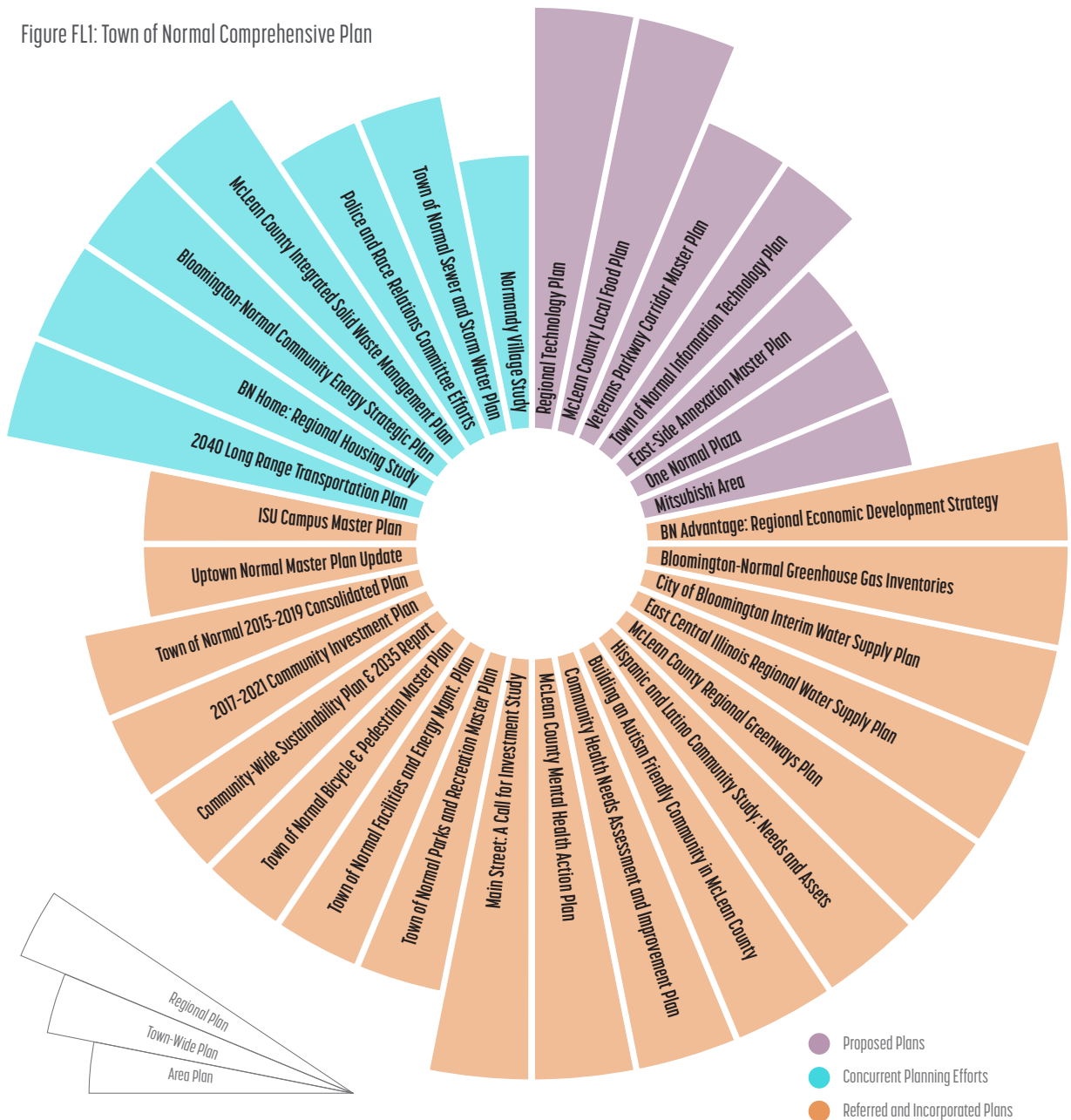
While the Town has set the pace for smart growth for cities its size, there are lessons to be learned from other communities on aspects such as urban sprawl, expanding transportation and housing choices, preserving community character, and using technology to advance as a smart city. As the Town focuses on becoming a complete, connected, and compact community, it can greatly benefit from studying and sharing best practices with peer cities around the nation.

Measure progress and adapt

This plan created a set of easily understandable metrics and tools to measure progress. The Town should use these metrics and tools to review progress on the plan annually to assess the impacts of policies, programs, and projects. The measures and reporting should be highly visible to promote accountability, ideally through an ongoing community report card.

If these tracking procedures do not show the progress intended by the plan, within five years, necessary adjustments should be made accordingly. In that case, the actions, goals, or even the vision of the plan should be revisited. This comprehensive plan was designed and published specifically as a three ring binder to allow for it to be a living, breathing document.

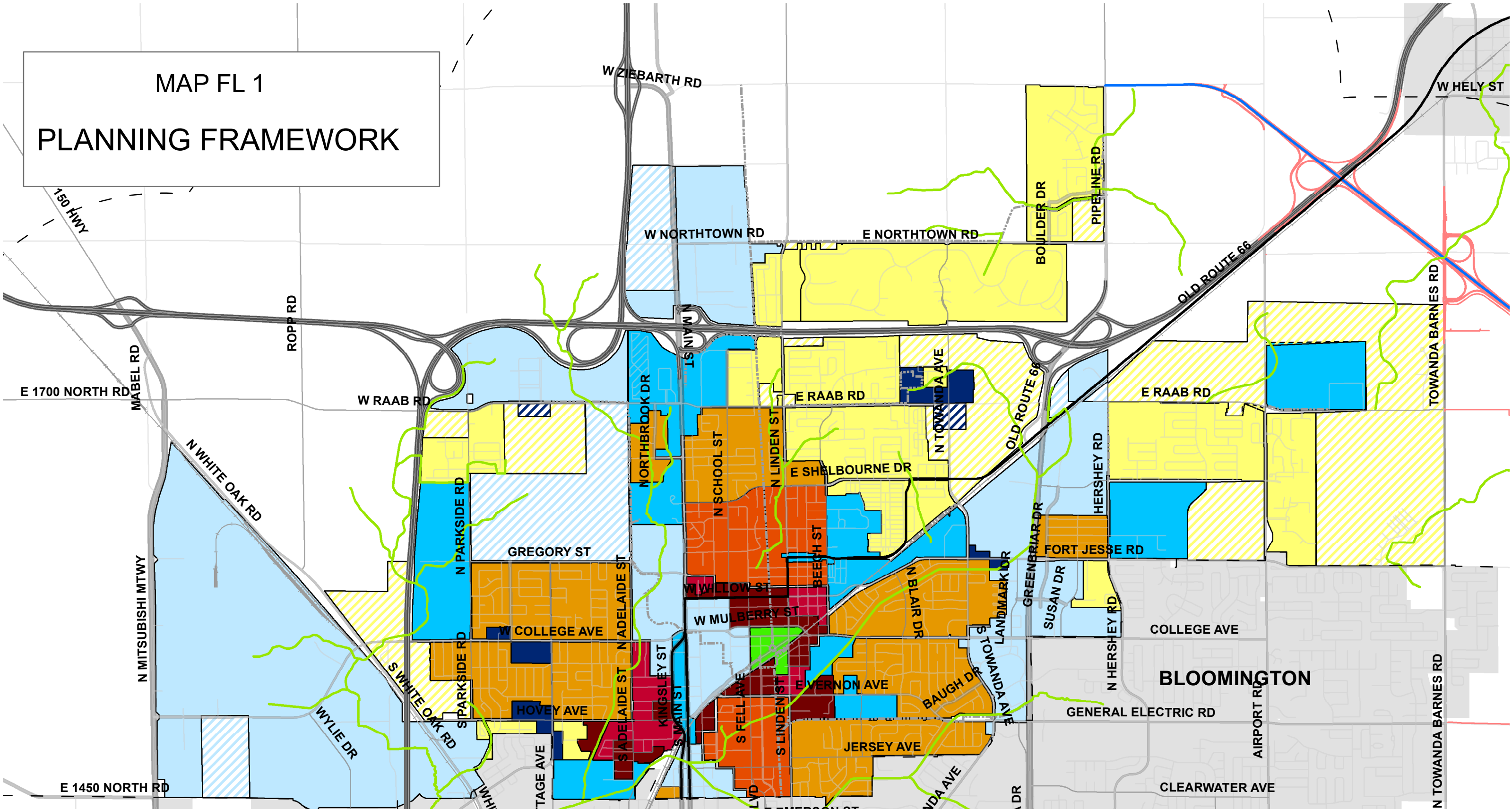
Figure FL1: Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan



Need for further planning

In the course of developing this report, staff examined many existing plans, programs, and initiatives that have contributed to Normal's quality of place thus far. This plan builds upon those assets but recognizes the need for additional planning in certain subject areas and geographies [See Figure FL1]. The Town can undertake some on its own, like an internal IT Master Plan, or sub-area plans for Neighborhoods and Centers, but it would need to collaborate with many other partners to undertake plans with a more regional focus (e.g., a regional technology plan).

MAP FL 1 PLANNING FRAMEWORK



Neighborhoods

- Old
- Early Suburban
- UIN 1
- UIN 2
- New Suburban
- Future

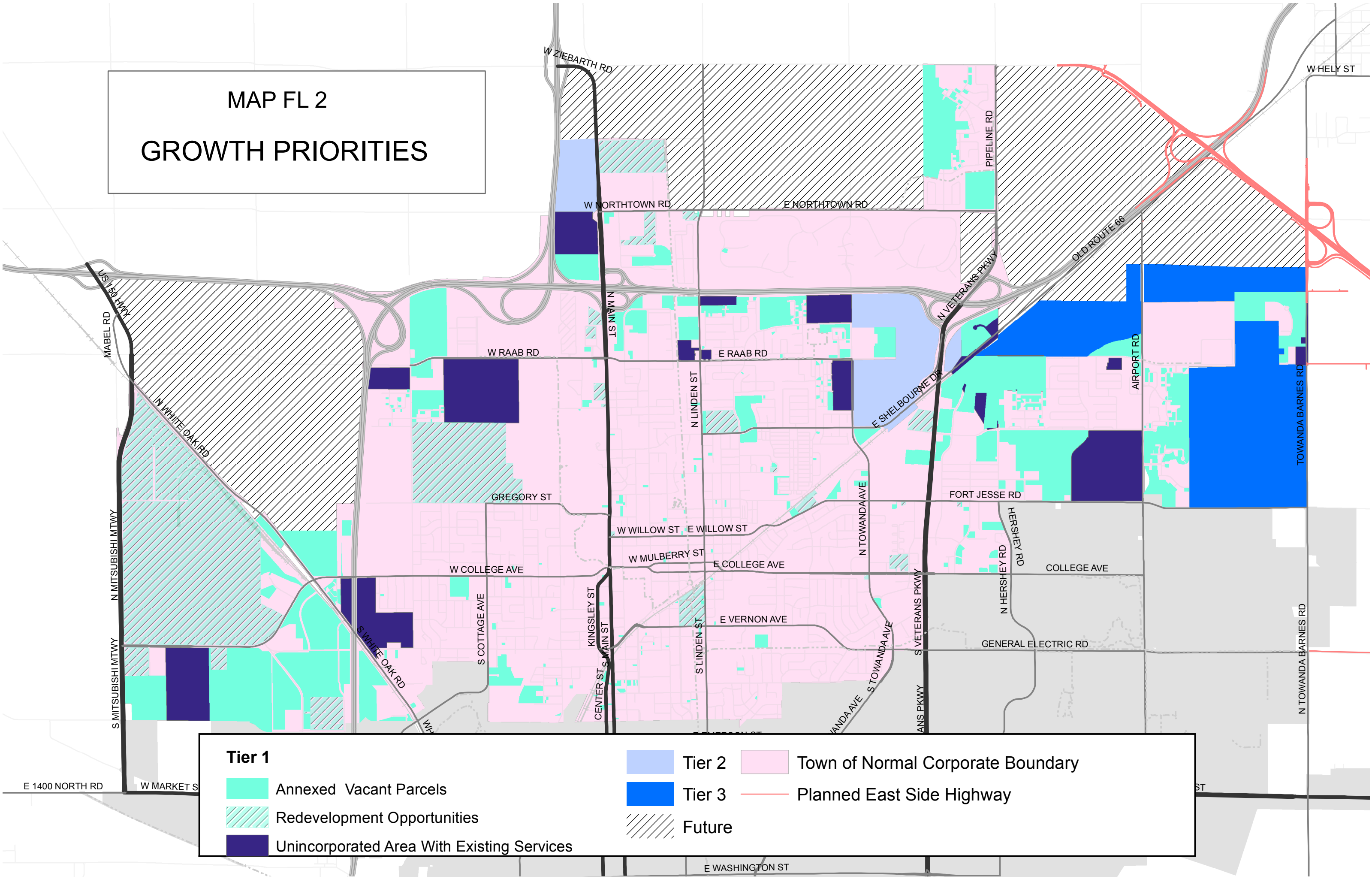
Centers

- Neighborhood
- Local
- Regional
- Town Center
- Future Neighborhood Center
- Future Regional Center

Corridors

- Natural Corridors
- Cultural Corridors
- Transportation Corridors
- Route 66
- Constitution Trail
- Railroad
- Streets
- Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
- Proposed Normal/Towanda Boundary Agrmt.
- Planned East Side Highway

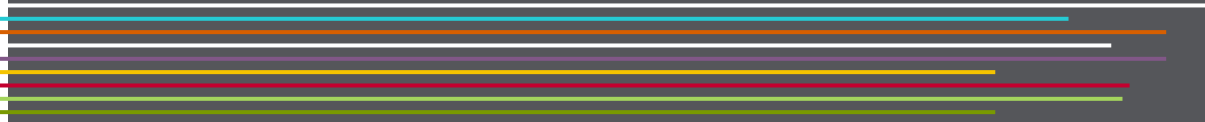
MAP FL 2 GROWTH PRIORITIES



Tier 1	Tier 2	Town of Normal Corporate Boundary
Annexed Vacant Parcels	Tier 3	Planned East Side Highway
Redevelopment Opportunities	Future	
Unincorporated Area With Existing Services		



ELEMENTS



PLANNING
ELEMENTS

How to Read the Elements Section

The plan’s seven Elements are Housing, Economic Vitality, Infrastructure and Public Safety, Health and Sustainability, Humanitarian and Social Aspects, Town and Gown, and Community Identity and Public Places. Each Element contains the following:

- **Table of Contents**
- **Introduction to the Element**
- **Connection to Vision:** The Vision and Core Values expressed in the 2040 Report became the foundation for the Goals expressed in various Elements of this comprehensive plan. This section outlines how the Goals within the Element are furthering the core values established in the visioning process.

- **Goal:** A goal is a desired, ideal end-state for a particular community resource or feature. Example: Reduce economic inequality and promote opportunity for all residents.

*Each Goal is followed by a discussion of its significance, a list of **positive contributors** in place today that will help the Town achieve that Goal, the **challenges** the Town will face in order to achieve the Goal and the **list of partners** (potential stakeholders) who can help move the Goal forward.*

*In addition, each Goal has a **list of metrics to measure its success**. Baseline data for these metrics is included in the Appendix section.*

- **Strategy:** A course of action or guideline for taking actions and decisions toward pursuing a long-term goal. Example: Protect and Promote Historic Elements that Contribute to Normal’s Unique Identity
- **Action:** A specific task or project implemented to carry out a policy. Often, multiple action steps are taken to carry out a given strategy. Actions can include projects, programs or regulations
- **Quick wins (Q):** Some actions are marked at the end with a “Q” in parenthesis. These items are identified as quick wins, meaning their implementation can happen within a short time frame and with the existing resources for the most part.

Every goal, strategy, and action was assigned an alphanumeric identifier to accurately locate it. [See Figure 3 below for an example and abbreviations.]

Identifiers

H	Housing
EV	Economic Vitality
HS	Health and Sustainability
IP	Infrastructure and Public Safety
HSA	Humanitarian and Social Aspects
TG	Town and Gown
CIPP	Community Identity and Public Places

Goal **HSA 1** } Goal #
Element

Strategy **HSA 1.1** } Strategy #
Element Goal #

Action **HSA 1. 1 a** } Action Item
Element Goal # Strategy #

THE FLATS

611

HOUSING

“What else is a nation
but a patchwork of cities
and towns; cities and
towns a patchwork
of neighborhoods;
and neighborhoods
a patchwork of homes?”

—Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

Housing CONTENTS

E1.3	Introduction
E1.7	Goal H1: Ensure the availability of safe, affordable, attractive, and high-quality housing to meet the needs, preferences, and capabilities of all current and future residents.
E1.9	Strategy H1.1—Ensure that New Housing Development and Redevelopment Contributes to a Complete, Compact, and Connected Community
E1.14	Strategy H1.2—Preserve and Improve the Existing Housing Stock
E1.16	Strategy H1.3—Guarantee Access to High-Quality Supportive and Affordable Housing Options



Enclave Subdivision in the New Suburban Area



In recent years, the Town of Normal has made a pronounced shift toward new land use philosophies and the incorporation of smart growth principles. To build on this progress and provide adequate housing options to all current and future residents, the Town will need to better align its housing policies with those principles and continuously adapt to demographic and market changes.



As discussed elsewhere in this *Plan*, the Town has fostered innovation with recent developments like Uptown Normal and the proposed Uptown 2.0 projects by embracing compact and sustainable growth principles. However, while Normal has been successful in promoting smart growth principles in its public places and the Town center, obstacles remain in pushing these ideas forward in the area of housing development.

One such obstacle is an overabundance of certain types of housing units. One of the key findings of the regional housing study is that Normal (and the BN Metro Area) is generally overbuilt and has more housing units than can be absorbed by 2020. This is especially true for single-family detached units. Making matters more complicated is Normal's potential to add nearly 4,000 new residential units through already-approved annexation agreements. These developments have the potential to add to the oversupply of single-family detached housing while increasing sprawl and associated infrastructure costs.

They are also out of step with how the housing market is evolving. A multitude of studies have shown that preferences are shifting from large, single-family detached homes in suburban-style subdivisions to smaller homes in more vibrant, walkable locations with a variety of things to do. These trends are particularly strong among young professionals and Baby Boomers. Indeed, the Uptown Housing Study, published as part of the "Uptown 2.0" plan in 2015, proposes that the Town add nearly 1,000 units in the Uptown area, primarily aimed at young professionals and "empty nesters" who want urban amenities in a smaller, more affordable setting.

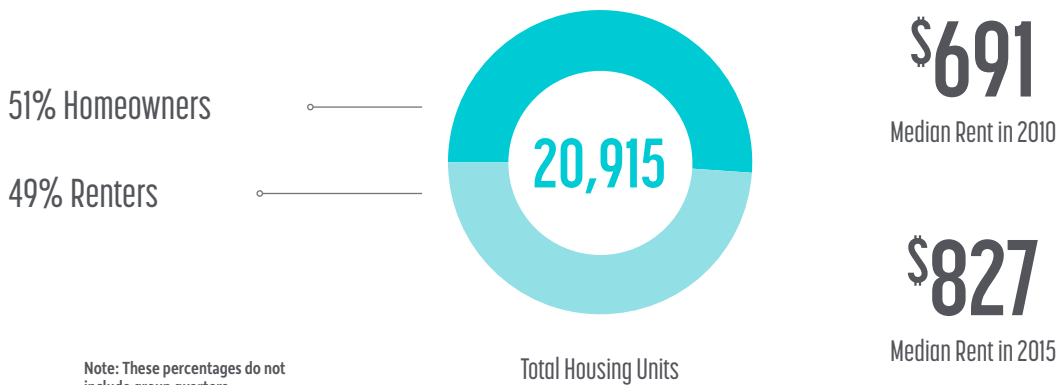
Another potential challenge is affordability. Normal's (and the BN Metro Area) housing stock is reasonably priced for most people, but affordability remains a concern for certain populations, including recent graduates, young professionals, seniors on fixed incomes, people with disabilities, and low- to moderate-income households. A number of factors contribute to this issue:

- The long-lasting housing boom of large single-family detached styles has turned into a prominent business model for developers.
- Developers tend to pursue the most profitable developments, so new affordable housing

cannot happen without significant public subsidies.

- Student housing demand has created a highly profitable rental market focused primarily on high-end units in recent years. While this type of development does serve the needs of many students and encourages other types of economic development, it also drives up rents and does little for people who need more affordable housing options.
- The cost of retrofitting existing homes to improve accessibility for people with mobility limitations (seniors, people with disabilities, etc.) is often prohibitive, and building accessibility features into new homes is an added cost for developers.
- Human service providers are generally located in Bloomington, which has encouraged the development of affordable housing there rather than in Normal. Housing developments that include some degree of supportive service integration may avoid these difficulties, but they are presently uncommon in both communities.
- Affordable housing development in Illinois is strongly driven by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA)'s Opportunity Area designations, which provide incentives for affordable housing development in areas that meet certain criteria. In Normal, some of these areas lack good access to transit and amenities, making affordable housing development more challenging [See Map H2].
- Some developers cite increased regulatory costs and high property taxes as factors that significantly reduce their margins for new construction.
- A longstanding culture of sprawl—large homes and large lots—deterred smaller, more affordable housing options particularly with multimodal transportation access.
- Subsidized housing units (project-based Section 8) tend to be concentrated rather than evenly distributed throughout the Town.

Despite these challenges, the trend toward more sustainable development and general support from policymakers for new types of housing development provide a window of opportunity to embrace new design, rehabilitate existing neighborhoods, and create a more diverse and affordable housing stock that meets the needs of all residents in Normal. This will require new approaches to regulating developments, incentive structures, programming, and partnerships as policymakers work in concert with the development community to adapt to changing market conditions.



Note: These percentages do not include group quarters.

\$162,300
Median Home Value

\$271,000
Median Home Value-New

Sources
Home Values: 2011–2015 American Community Survey
Median Rent: 2006–2010 and 2011–2015 American Community Survey
Housing Units: 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



BN Home—Regional Housing Study

Housing is a regional issue that will need to be addressed by multiple partners. The BN Home study provides an overview of regional issues and recommendations, along with other plans such as the *Mental Health Action Plan* and the *Bring It On Bloomington Comprehensive Plan*, which include deeper analyses of issues beyond Normal's borders.

Recognizing that housing is best addressed at the regional level, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), in partnership with the City, the Town, and the Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA), initiated the region's first housing study: *BN HOME*. MCRPC retained the services of a consultant team, RATIO and AREA, to conduct this study, which is expected to be completed by fall 2017. Below are the findings from the first phase of the study-existing conditions analysis. These findings are for the entire region and not specific to Normal.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Bloomington-Normal is currently overbuilt**, meaning there is more housing than can be absorbed by 2020. This is especially true for single-family detached residential developments. Between 2010 and 2020 the region will need about one-third as many new housing units as were delivered in the prior decade. Based on the population projections, new housing needs will continue at approximately the same pace through 2040.
- **There is a mismatch between new housing supply and household size.** An analysis of the housing stock in Bloomington-Normal indicates that between 2000 and 2010 the number of housing units with three or more bedrooms increased by more than 10,300 while the region added only 2,500 households with three or more persons. In contrast, the region added about 5,500 one- and two-person households but only 2,500 housing units with zero to two bedrooms.
- **McLean County is relatively affordable compared to peer communities;** however, there are two gaps in the supply of affordable housing. The first is low-income households that need a rent subsidy. Currently, subsidies are available for less than 10% of the estimated 8,000 family households that need them. The second group is elderly households with incomes between \$25,000 and \$35,000.
- **Few housing opportunities exist for the homeless population.** Providing the homeless with permanent housing remains a major challenge.
- **Housing options for persons with disabilities aged 18 to 64 are limited.** There appears to be a variety of housing options for older persons with disabilities but facilities are limited for persons aged 18 to 64 who have mobility limitations or other disabilities. The actual need is difficult to identify because those in this category tend to live with family. Experience suggests that suitable affordable housing would enable persons with mobility limitations to lead more independent lives.

Connection to the Vision

Core Value 2: Economy. Ours will be an innovative and diverse economy in 2040 that has grown from what it was in 2016.

Core Value 3: Ours is an inter-related community visible through safe and accessible spaces that people love.

Core Value 4: Ours is a compassionate community that strives for social consciousness, responsiveness, and justice.

Core Value 8: Ours is an equitable health and wellness system, ensuring the healthy choice is the easy choice.

GOAL

Goal H1: Ensure the availability of safe, affordable, attractive, and high-quality housing meets the needs, preferences, and capabilities of all current and future residents.



Neighborhood on the west side of Normal



Neighborhood on the east side of Normal

Goal H1: Ensure the Availability of Safe, Affordable, Attractive, and High-Quality Housing Meets the Needs, Preferences, and Capabilities of All Current and Future Residents.

Broadly speaking, Normal residents have a diverse and attractive set of housing options. Normal's housing stock includes a mix of new and old homes in a variety of styles; safe, largely affordable neighborhoods; and a balanced mix of ownership and rental units.

At the neighborhood level, however, housing options tend to be fairly homogeneous, especially in the newer neighborhoods—one may be dominated by large, single-family detached homes, while another consists exclusively of apartments, townhomes, and duplexes. Prices are reasonable overall, but affordable housing is lacking for people of low to moderate incomes, and low-rent housing is generally kept separate from higher-priced areas. Low densities and inconsistent multimodal access limit connectivity to shopping, education, and green space while raising utility and transportation costs. Near the center of town, where small, well-designed units could attract young professionals, empty-nesters, and childless adults with a desire for more urban-style living, such units are almost entirely unavailable. Future housing development should aim to create more complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods, as outlined in the Planning Framework Chapter.

Achieving this goal will require a thorough understanding of changing market conditions. As discussed in the *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report*, Normal in 2040 will have smaller families, an older population, and two dominant generations—Millennials and Generation Z—that have different housing preferences from their predecessors. Normal's neighborhoods must offer more varied housing types and price points, more support for aging in place, better integration with supportive services, and greater accessibility for users of all modes of transportation. In short, they should provide a broader range of housing options that more effectively meet the demands of a changing population.

Positive Contributors

- Existing housing diversity at the Town-wide level
- Effective code enforcement and not much blight
- Collaboration with committees like the Historic Preservation Commission and Uptown Design Review Commission
- Neighborhood Action Team (NAT)

Challenges

- Lack of programming, incentives, educational workshops, partnerships, etc. to help make housing more affordable and accessible

- Lack of organized and active neighborhood groups throughout the Town
- Developers not interested in pursuing innovative housing solutions
- Most multi-family units are near Illinois State University (ISU) and cater mostly to college students
- Privately owned infrastructure and challenges to neighborhoods without a HOA or change in property ownership

Indicators and Metrics

- Housing diversity index by neighborhood
- Median Home Value

- Median Rent
- % Homeownership
- Average sale price of a new home
- Average sale price of all homes
- Average cost of construction per square foot
- # Residential construction permits broken down by housing type
- # Code violations/ Neighborhood
- Housing cost burden (ownership and rental)

Partners

- See Appendix for a list of partner agencies and organizations marked with a [H]



Strategy H1.1—Ensure That New Housing Development and Redevelopment Contribute to a Complete, Compact, and Connected Community

- H1.1a Encourage Well-Designed New and Redeveloped Housing on Vacant, Infill, or Undeveloped Land with Access to Existing Municipal Services, Infrastructure, and Transit
- H1.1b Minimize Regulatory Barriers to Allow Innovative and Compact Developments
- H1.1c Utilize Future Annexation Agreements as an Instrument to Increase Diversity in Housing Types, Sizes, and Densities in New Development Projects
- H1.1d Ensure That Diverse Housing Options Located in and around Neighborhood, Local, and Regional Centers are of Higher Density
- H1.1e Investigate Incorporating Visitability or Universal Design Standards in New Construction
- H1.1f Encourage the Inclusion of Public Green and Gathering Spaces Within New Developments
- H1.1g Hold Seminars and Workshops for Developers, Landlords, Homeowners, and Policymakers on Housing Issues

Strategy H1.2—Preserve and Improve the Existing Housing Stock

- H1.2a Incorporate Findings from the Town’s Rental Inspection Program into Future Planning Decisions
- H1.2b Create Financial Incentives to Rehabilitate Existing Homes and to Enhance the Quality of Residential Neighborhoods

Strategy H1.3—Guarantee Access to High-Quality Supportive and Affordable Housing Options

- H1.3a Pursue Innovative Financing Mechanisms in Order to Create Greater Affordability Within the Community
- H1.3b Investigate Shared Housing Programs, Which Can Help Increase Affordability for a Vast Number of Residents
- H1.3c Support Services that Assist Underserved Populations of the Community by Partnering with the County, Social Service Agencies, the Bloomington Housing Authority, and Other Service Providers
- H1.3d Encourage Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing Developments for Households with Low to Moderate Incomes in Qualified Census Tracts and in IHDA Opportunity Areas
- H1.3e Improve Transit Access to Neighborhoods with a Higher Concentration of Seniors to Further Promote Independent Lifestyles
- H1.3f Develop Programs to Increase Home Ownership Among Low- to Moderate-Income Residents

Strategy H1.1—Ensure that New Housing Development and Redevelopment Contribute to a Complete, Compact, and Connected Community

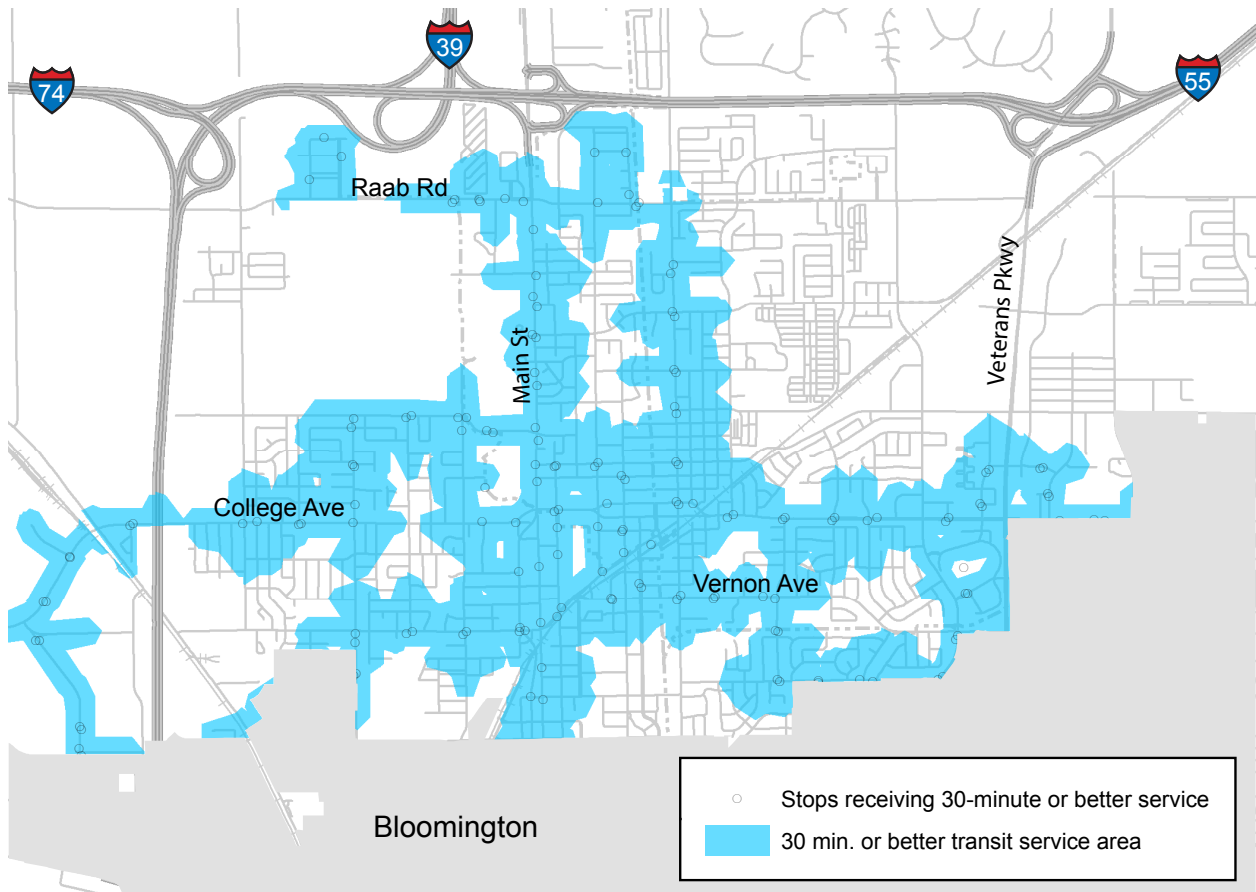
Nearly half of the Town’s housing stock was built after 1980. As a result, Normal’s housing stock is generally newer and reflects the suburban growth patterns and large, single-family homes characteristic of that period. Given projected demographic trends, there is a mismatch between the existing housing stock and anticipated needs going forward. Future plans and developments should accommodate changing demographics, shifts in demand, altering housing preferences, safety, affordability, and accessibility.

H1.1a—Encourage Well-Designed New and Redeveloped Housing on Vacant, Infill, or Undeveloped Land with Access to Existing Municipal Services, Infrastructure, and Transit

- Favor new neighborhood designs that promote internal connections over isolated subdivisions.
- Encourage higher densities near well-served transit stops, parks, schools, and other amenities.

H1.1b—Minimize Regulatory Barriers to Allow Innovative and Compact Developments

MAP H1: 30 Minute or Better Transit Service Areas





Single family residence in the Vineyards Subdivision on the east side of Normal

- Examine code requirements, particularly those going beyond health and safety standards, which may be contributing to higher development costs. Identify ways to minimize any burdensome regulations. (Q)
- Most new developments do not fully utilize the density provisions allowed per the Zoning Ordinance [See Table H1]. This could be due to a mismatch between densities allowed to the lot, yard, and right-of-way requirements. The Town should review development regulations and make any necessary adjustments to enable compact developments. (Q)
- The Town's Traditional Neighborhood Design standards have yet to be applied towards innovative development solutions. Educate local developers on these standards to encourage better utilization of this tool.
- Align subdivision regulation with some of the Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) standards, such as block length and width. (Q)

TABLE H1: Allowed and observed densities by residential zoning classification

		DENSITY IN UNITS/ACRE		
		Allowed	Observed Town-wide Average	Observed New Development Average*
R-1A	Low Density Single-Family Residence Dist	4	3.4	2.6
R-1B	Medium Density Single-Family Residence Dist	6	4.9	5.1
R-2	Mixed Residence Dist	14	6.9	7.1
R-3A	Medium Density Multiple-Family Residence Dist	12 to 18	16.5	16.8
R-3B	High Density Multiple-Family Residence Dist	Up to 72	31.2	45.1

*New development average—Observed residential densities in new residential developments built after 2000
 [See *Community Snapshot & Outreach Report* for more information.]

Subdivision requirements could potentially be regulatory barriers to housing affordability.

According to a study conducted by the NAHB Research Center for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD):

“Subdivision regulations are intended to ensure that proposed housing developments are cost-effective (i.e., reduce extensive long-term maintenance by the locality), meet health and safety requirements, are properly designed, and have a favorable impact on the community. The cost of these requirements represents a significant share of the cost of producing new housing. Such requirements can reasonably be considered ‘regulatory barriers’ to affordability of housing if the locally determined requirements are greater (and hence, more costly) than those necessary to achieve health and safety requirements in the community.”

The three major subdivision regulations increasing costs are lot size, lot width, and floor area. Land is the most substantial cost associated with housing and large lot size requirements will quickly increase the price. The width of lots also contributes to price due to more money being spent on sidewalks, sewer main, water main, storm sewer, curb and gutter, street pavement, etc. When houses are far away from each other (Urban Sprawl), then all of these systems have to be expanded and maintained over time, which challenges the long term fiscal sustainability of a community.

Source: Study of Subdivision Requirements as a Regulatory Barrier, by NAHB Research Center https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/subdiv_report.pdf

H1.1c—Utilize Future Annexation Agreements as an Instrument to Increase Diversity in Housing Types, Sizes, and Densities in New Development Projects

The *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report* showed that many existing annexation agreements, that continue to promote low-density developments, are about to expire. The Town should reexamine the annexation agreements as they expire, and create a comprehensive annexation policy to encourage more complete, connected, and compact neighborhoods. [See *Planning Framework* for more discussion] (Q)

H1.1d—Ensure that Diverse Housing Options Located in and Around Neighborhood, Local, and Regional Centers Are of Higher Density [See Centers Chapter in the Planning Framework Section.]



Apartments on the east side of Normal



Townhomes near ISU campus

H1.1e—Investigate Incorporating Visitability or Universal Design Standards in New Construction

Such standards will help increase the proportion of housing usable by a wide spectrum of people.

- There are several misconceptions about these standards. It is important to educate local developers and builders on the importance and practicality of these standards to meet the growing need.

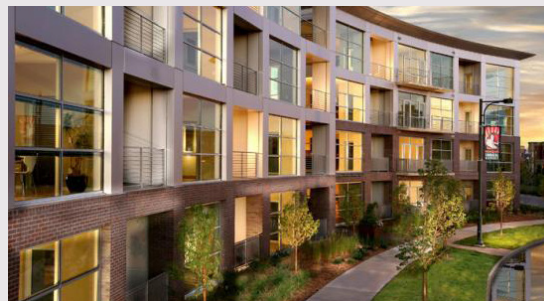
Visitability and Universal Design Standards—Creating Ageless Communities

Creating ageless communities has benefits for all age groups. Ramps and gradual slopes not only benefit people in wheelchairs, but also create a welcoming environment to parents walking their children in strollers. In addition, slower traffic patterns and larger sidewalks create a safer environment for children walking and playing. These standards, when applied to new construction, can also create housing for all abilities at a more reasonable price than having to retrofit existing structures.

Case Study

Stapleton, Colorado is a mixed-use development complex that has numerous types of buildings, which fit the needs of different family sizes and multiple generations. This development is used as a national model for visitability and universal design concepts. The site has ample amenities such as tire pumps for bicycles and garden plots for residents, which encourage downsizing in lot space and house size, while also promoting social activity. Additionally, this development has a percentage of affordable units dedicated to families and seniors.

For more information visit <https://urbanland.uli.org/industry-sectors/building-generations>.



Images from: <http://www.stapletondenver.com>

H1.1f—Encourage the Inclusion of Public Green and Gathering Spaces Within New Developments

This strategy should be coordinated with strategy H1.1e to encourage smaller lot sizes and planned communal spaces.

- Intentionally design green spaces to cater to specific users or neighborhood needs. Ensure that these spaces are designed in a way that facilitates active usage. Apartments and condominiums are prime examples of development types capable of supporting these open spaces. *[See Health & Sustainability Element and Community Identity & Public Places Element.]*



Connie Link Amphitheatre in Normal

H1.1g—Hold Seminars and Workshops for Developers, Landlords, Homeowners, and Policymakers on Housing Issues

- This action is best accomplished at a regional level. Consider partnering with the County, City of Bloomington, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA), and others to bring educational topics like mixed-use developments, affordable housing developments, historic preservation, energy efficiency, universal design, and other innovative housing developments.

Strategy H1.2—Preserve and Improve the Existing Housing Stock

As the Town continues to grow, there needs to be additional emphasis on maintaining and improving existing housing structures in order to preserve the present character of the region, safeguard affordability, and maintain the Town’s tax base, as the costs of new construction are going up.

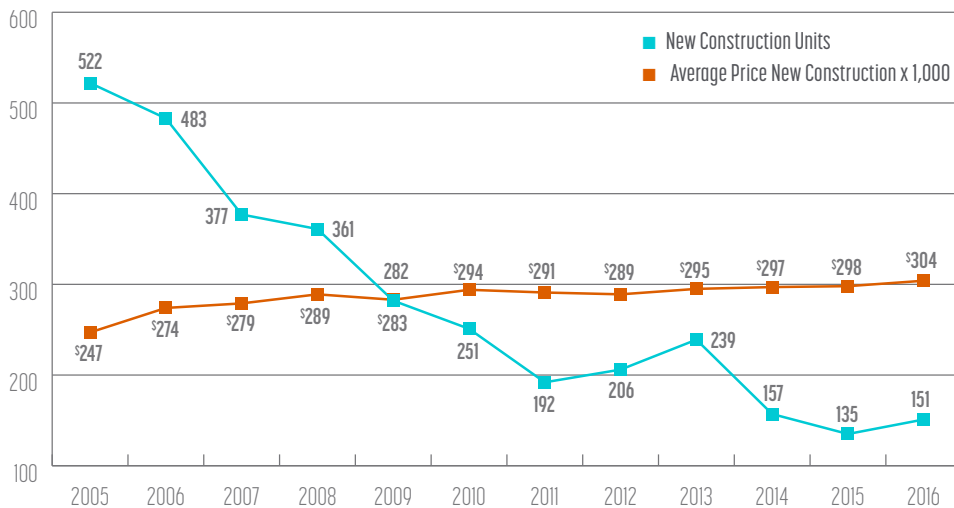


Chart H1: Average cost of new single family house in thousands and number of new constructions in BN
 Geography: Bloomington-Normal. Source: Bloomington Normal Association of Realtors

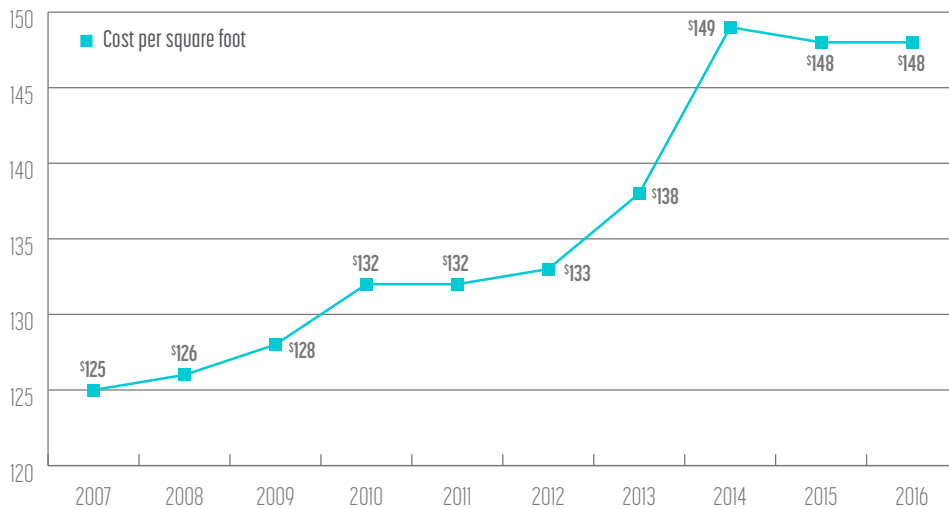


Chart H2: Average construction cost per square feet.
 Source: Bloomington Normal Association of Realtors

H1.2a—Incorporate Findings from the Town’s Rental Inspection Program into Future Planning Decisions

Staff should consider utilizing geographic information systems (GIS) and other technologies to gather data from the Town’s Rental Inspection program and document their findings to be used for future planning.

Normal’s Rental Inspection Program

All multi-family rental properties are required to apply for a rental occupancy license each year. This process includes a rental inspection before a license is issued. Based on last year’s annual report, this generally includes about 1,230 buildings and 8,900 dwelling units. The majority of the rental inventory is apartments but also includes rental duplexes, Fraternities and Sororities, and Mixed Use buildings (commercial with units above). The inspection is pass or fail and properties that face minor infractions have 1–2 weeks to fix the problem before a re-inspection. For more information on the criteria scored see the Town of Normal annual housing inspection checklist.

H1.2b—Create Financial Incentives to Rehabilitate Existing Homes and to Enhance the Quality of Residential Neighborhoods

Incentives should be structured bearing in mind accessibility, energy efficiency, and other issues unique to older homes. Examples include loans to fix roofs, repair windows and water heaters, improve front porches, and improve the physical accessibility of homes.



Single family home in the historic Cedar Crest Neighborhood

Strategy H1.3—Provide Access to High-Quality Supportive and Affordable Housing Options

As identified by the BN Home study, Normal and the BN Region are generally affordable. However, there is a need for affordable housing options for certain sectors of the population within the community. Seniors, households with low to moderate incomes, people with intellectual, mental, and physical disabilities, and chronically homeless populations have varying service, housing, and transportation needs. Providing an array of affordable housing options with access to services for all residents is imperative.

Affordable housing programs established by HUD (public housing and Section 8) use different eligibility criteria than the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Households are eligible for HUD’s low-income housing programs if they earn below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI), even though the vast majority of participants earn less than 30% of AMI. The LIHTC program, which provides financial incentives for the development of affordable rental housing, restricts rents to levels affordable for households earning 60% or 50% of AMI. Thus, the public housing and Section 8 rent subsidy programs tend to serve households of considerably lower incomes than those who can afford rents charged for units created by the LIHTC program.

Definitions of housing costs for owners and renters.

Housing costs for homeowners = mortgage + property taxes + insurance + utilities

Housing costs for renters = rent + utilities

These definitions are important to distinguish because housing costs include expenses beyond rent and mortgage payments, and these additional costs are often forgotten about in this discussion. Families or individuals may still be spending well over 30% of AMI due to energy inefficiency or spikes in property taxes. Housing is considered affordable for a family when housing costs do not exceed 30% of income.

Bloomington-Normal Income Limits for Affordable Housing Programs

Category	AMI	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person
Low- Income	80%	\$46,000	\$52,000	\$59,150	\$65,700	\$71,000
Very Low- Income	50%	\$30,700	\$35,100	\$39,500	\$43,850	\$47,400
Extremely Low- Income	30%	\$18,420	\$21,060	\$23,700	\$26,310	\$28,440

Rent Limits for Low Income Housing Tax Credits in McLean County

AMI	0 Bedroom	1 Bedroom	2 Bedroom	3 Bedroom	4 Bedroom
60%	\$921	\$987	\$1,185	\$1,368	\$1,527
50%	\$767	\$822	\$987	\$1,140	\$1,272

H1.3a—Pursue Innovative Financing Mechanisms in Order to Create Greater Affordability Within the Community

- Consider establishing a rehabilitation grant geared toward updating affordable housing units for people with low to moderate incomes in both single and multifamily structures.
- Create a loss fund for landlords in partnerships with other stakeholders such as banks and insurance companies. Such a fund would help secure affordable rental housing units by alleviating the burden of security deposits for eligible tenants.
 - Example: City of Orlando and Orange County, Florida created a Central Florida Supportive Housing Program.²
- Examine the effectiveness of tax deferrals, homestead exemptions, and senior exemptions in maintaining senior property taxes at affordable levels for seniors on fixed incomes.
 - The Maturing For America: Communities Moving Forward For An Aging Population, a report produced by Metlife Foundation, American Planning Association, National League of Cities, and other partners, identified that the property tax relief for older adults on limited incomes shows a steep drop in availability, from 72% in 2005 to 54% in 2010³.

H1.3b—Investigate Shared Housing Programs, which Can Help Increase Affordability for a Vast Number of Residents

According to the National Shared Housing Resource Center, shared housing programs are when a homeowner offers accommodation to a homesharer in exchange for an agreed level of support in the form of financial exchange, assistance with household tasks, or both. These programs can also alleviate the constraints agencies and individuals face due to detailed program requirements.

H1.3c—Support Services that Assist Underserved Populations of the Community by Partnering with the County, Social Service Agencies, the Bloomington Housing Authority, and Other Service Providers

Door-to-door and door-through-door transportation services assist seniors and people with intellectual disabilities, mental disabilities, and limited physical ability to live more independently.

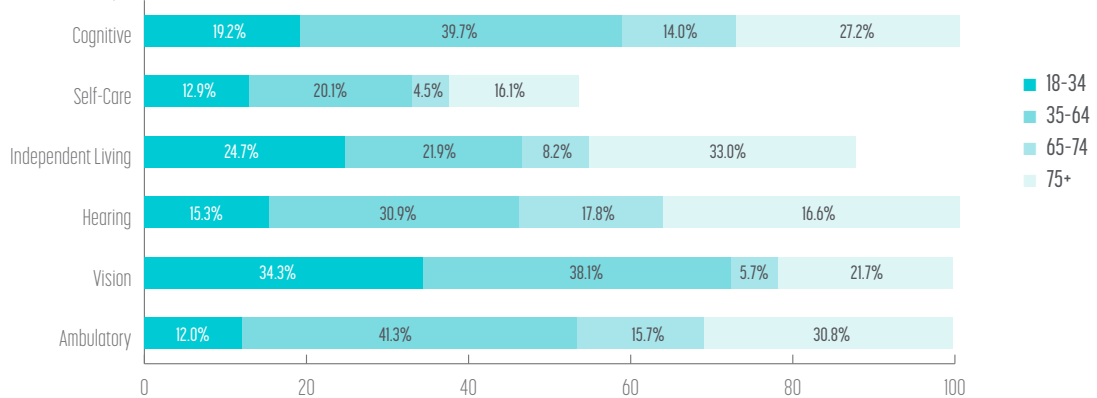


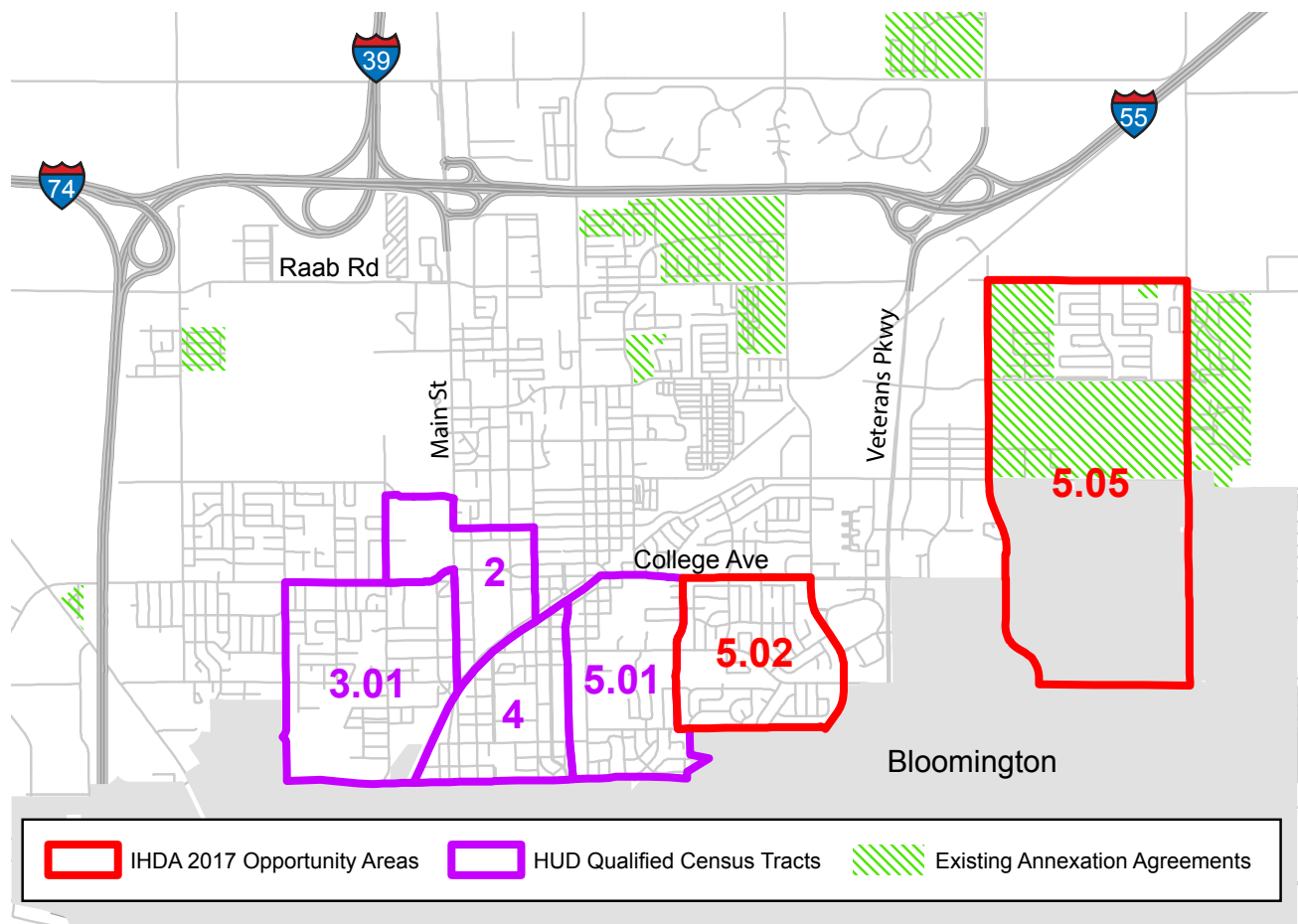
Chart H3: Percentage of people with a disability by age group in McLean County.

Source: American Community Survey, 5-year 2014; Applied Real Estate Analysis through BN Home: Regional Housing Study

H1.3d Encourage Affordable and Permanent Supportive Housing Developments for Households with Low to Moderate Incomes in Qualified Census Tracts and in IHDA Opportunity Areas

[See Map H2.]

MAP H2: OPPORTUNITY AREAS AND HUD QUALIFIED CENSUS TRACTS



Both IHDA opportunity areas and HUD-qualified census tracts provide extra incentives for developers to build affordable housing. When a developer builds affordable housing in opportunity areas, they receive extra points on LIHTC applications. Qualified census tracts receive a financial benefit, called a basis boost, when they develop affordable units within the tract.

H1.3e—Improve Transit Access to Neighborhoods with a Higher Concentration of Seniors to Further Promote Independent Lifestyles

H1.3f—Develop Programs to Increase Home Ownership Among Low- to Moderate-Income Residents

Partner with banks, major employers, the City of Bloomington, the Bloomington Housing Authority, not-for-profit organizations, and other regional agencies to assist low- and moderate-income households with home purchases and home improvements.

- Potential programs may include lease-to-purchase, private activity bonds, downpayment assistance, employer-assisted housing, and credit counseling.

Relaxed Pet Policies

Agencies and residents suggested that relaxed pet policies would be beneficial, as pets are vital companions for many seniors. Many seniors have pets and are not allowed to bring them to their assisted living arrangements, which can cause pets to go up for adoption or delay moving to supportive housing. While the Town has no control over this issue, it did arise during the outreach portion of this *Plan*.

[See the Community Snapshot & Outreach Report for more information on additional concerns of aging in place for seniors.]



HOUSING TOOLKIT

Funding Sources

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Grants

HUD's program works to ensure decent affordable housing, to provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses. HUD determines the amount of each grant by using a formula comprised of several measures of community need, including the extent of poverty, population, housing overcrowding, age of housing, and population growth lag in relation to other metropolitan areas.

Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Funds

CRA requires banks with at least \$250 million in assets to play an active role in community and economic development. This includes their lending and investing services. Therefore, local banks can become partners in a community's affordable housing efforts. For example, in the Chicago area, CRA programs have helped to create or re-finance senior housing, special needs housing, battered women's shelters, and single family homes.⁵

HOME Funds

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) provides formula grants to States and localities that communities use—often in partnership with local nonprofit groups—to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. HOME is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.⁶

Illinois Public Housing Authority Energy Program

The Illinois Energy Efficient Affordable Housing Construction Program, which is funded by the Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standards fund (EEPS), provides \$5 million annually in grants to non-profit and for-profit affordable housing developers to help offset the cost of incorporating energy efficient building practices in residential construction.⁷

Impact Fees

Impact fees are payments required by local governments of new development for the purpose of providing new or expanded public capital facilities required to serve that development. The fees typically require cash payments in advance of the completion of development, are based on a methodology and calculation derived from the cost of the facility and the nature and size of the development, and are used to finance improvements offsite, but to the benefit of, the development.⁸

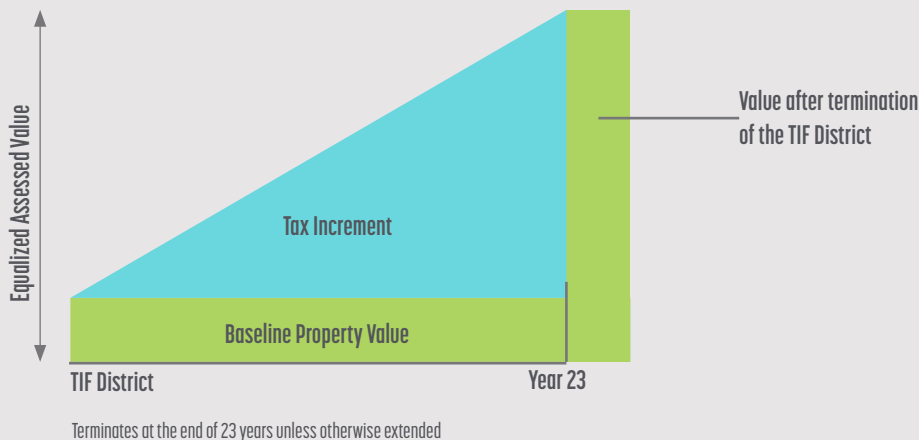
Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

Created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, the LIHTC program gives State and local LIHTC-allocating agencies the equivalent of nearly \$8 billion in annual budget authority to issue tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income households.⁹

Funding Sources Continued—

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

TIF districts are created to fund economic development projects in areas where development would not otherwise occur. Property tax revenue derived from increases in property value that occur after the district is established, or the “tax increment,” is used to fund projects within that district. Most often housing-related developments or improvements qualify for TIF funding. The Town of Normal currently has five (5) active TIF districts: One Normal Plaza, Main/Osage, Main/I-55, North Normal Warehouse, and Uptown Normal. Some encompass wide areas; others are site-specific.



Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Tax Credits

Under Illinois' Economic Development for a Growing Economy (EDGE) incentive, businesses are awarded corporate income tax credits based on the value of personal income tax revenue that will be created at companies that are relocating or expanding. The Business Location Efficiency Incentive Act revised the EDGE incentive to better align with the state's goal of promoting compact development and defines a location-efficient project as one that “avoids or minimizes additional government expenditures for new infrastructure, and has nearby affordable housing or has accessible and affordable mass transit.” Companies that locate in location-efficient sites get a 10 percent bonus on EDGE payments.

Social Impact Bonds (SIB)

Social Impact Bonds are a performance-based financing tool that enables governments to pay for programs that meet the expected outcomes. They are a financing instrument in which repayment of principal and a rate of return are contingent on the success of achieving agreed-upon program goals. Example: In 2016, the City of Denver developed an SIB initiative of \$8.7 million to provide housing and supportive case management services to at least 250 homeless individuals.

Weatherization Assistance Programs

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Weatherization Assistance Program reduces energy costs for low-income households by increasing the energy efficiency of their homes, while ensuring their health and safety.⁶

Development Incentives and Other Tools

Density Bonus

A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits developers to increase the maximum allowable development on a property in exchange for helping the community achieve public policy goals.⁷ This technique would be beneficial in desirable areas such as Uptown. Public policies could reflect environmental preservation and affordable housing goals.

Housing Choice Voucher

The participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies (PHAs). The PHAs receive federal funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to administer the voucher program.⁸

Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

This is a new affordable housing production program that will complement existing federal, state and local efforts to increase and preserve the supply of decent, safe, and sanitary affordable housing for extremely low- and very low-income households, including homeless families. HTF funds may be used for the production or preservation of affordable housing through the acquisition, new construction, reconstruction, and/or rehabilitation of non-luxury housing with suitable amenities.⁹

Ex. Beltline Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Inclusionary Zoning

Inclusionary zoning programs vary in their structures; they can be mandatory or voluntary and have different set-aside requirements, affordability levels, and control periods. Most inclusionary zoning programs offer developers incentives, such as density bonuses, expedited approval, and fee waivers.¹⁰

LIHTC Qualified Census Tracts

Qualified census tracts have 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) or have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more.¹¹

Loss Fund for Landlords

Loss funds are a risk mitigation fund as an added protection for landlords willing to rent to someone with limited income, a poor rental history, or a criminal history. The funds can cover excessive damages to the rental unit, lost rent, or legal fees beyond the security deposit. Reimbursement limits are set in advance and landlords typically submit a claim for reimbursement.¹²

Mixed-Income Developments

Mixed-income housing developments are comprised of housing units with different levels of affordability, typically with some market-rate housing and some housing that is available to low-income occupants below market rate. The mix of affordable and market-rate units that comprise mixed-income developments differ from community to community, and can depend, in part, on the local housing market and marketability of the units themselves.¹³

Opportunity Areas

Opportunity areas are communities with low poverty, high access to jobs and low concentrations of existing affordable rental housing. Developers who choose potential sites within IHDA's opportunity areas receive additional points on their LIHTC applications, which can make it more likely for the developer to actually receive these tax credits.¹⁴

Planned Unit Development

A PUD is a large, integrated development adhering to a comprehensive plan and typically located on a single tract of land. PUD is a form of development that, although conceived decades ago, can be used today to advance a number of important smart growth and sustainability objectives. A PUD has a number of distinct advantages over conventional lot-by-lot development. Properly administered, a PUD can offer a degree of flexibility that allows creativity in land planning, site design, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands not possible with conventional subdivision and development practices. Moreover, properly applied, a PUD is capable of mixing residential and non-residential land uses, providing broader housing choices, allowing more compact development, permanently preserving common open space, reducing vehicle trips, and providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities. In exchange for design flexibility, developers are better able to provide amenities and infrastructure improvements, and find it easier to accommodate environmental and scenic attributes.

Residential Conversion Grant Programs

Residential conversion grant programs are a way for property owners to turn multi-family units back to their original single-family residential uses.

Development Incentives and Other Tools

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units apply when a homeowner has a second small dwelling unit on his/her property. The unit can be an apartment over the garage, a small detached unit, or a basement apartment. These dwelling units can help bring multiple generations together, help people age in place, create affordability for the homeowner, and provide affordable rental options.

Aging in Place¹⁵

The vast majority of older adults want to age in place so they can continue to live in their homes or communities. As the older population grows, the degree to which it can participate in community life will be determined, in part, by how communities are designed. Specific policies for aging in place include integrating land use, housing and transportation; efficiently delivering services in the home; providing more transportation choices, particularly for older adults who no longer drive; and improving affordable, accessible housing to prevent social isolation.

A Live-Work Unit

A live-work unit is a way of referring to a building that is both the residence and place of business of the owner.

Employer-Assisted Housing

Employer-assisted housing helps employees live close to work, which reduces their commute time and allows for a greater choice in transportation modes. In such an arrangement, the employer will contribute to the downpayment when an employee purchases a home in the designated district. In turn, the employer will receive a tax benefit while also helping increase homeownership in their surroundings. Many communities in Illinois including Evanston, St. Charles, and Chicago have these programs. REACH Illinois, a not-for-profit organization, helps Illinois communities navigate the legal, technical, and financial aspects of the program.

Form-Based Code

A form-based code is a land development regulation that fosters predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. A form-based code is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law.

Reassessing Fee Structures

Public safety, school, and water fees should be reviewed periodically to determine whether they accurately reflect the costs of servicing development.

Shared Housing Programs

Under Shared Housing Programs, a homeowner offers to share their home with an individual in exchange for money, supportive services, or both. The National Shared Housing Resource Center provides more information on programs and how they can be successful.

Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing is an approach that places a person into the long-term housing that they can afford and creates the support that a person needs wrapped around them. Those services taper off or increase as a person ages, makes changes in lifestyle, and becomes more stable in their housing. All over the nation people are turning away from transitional housing, which was once a common practice. Today, federal and local governments are trying to create permanent supportive housing, and local agencies within Bloomington-Normal also discussed this need within the outreach portion of this Plan. Providing permanent supportive housing will help the homeless population, people with disabilities, and other groups for whom it can be difficult to find and maintain homes.

Traditional Neighborhood Design

TND, also known as neo-traditional development and new urbanism, is used to describe planning and development of newer developments that take their forms from the structure and layout of early-20th-century neighborhoods built before automobiles were widely used. The key principles of TNDs include:

- Compact neighborhoods with a mix of uses and housing types.
- A network of streets with sidewalks and street trees to facilitate convenient and safe movement throughout neighborhoods for all modes of transportation, with a focus on pedestrians.
- Integration of parks and public spaces into the neighborhood.
- Placement of important civic buildings on key sites to create landmarks and a strong sense of place.

Endnotes

1. Center for Budget and Policy Priorities - <https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/chart-book-federal-housing-spending-is-poorly-matched-to-need>
2. Homeless Services Network of Central Florida - <http://www.hsncl.org/programs/housing-locator/>
3. APA Symposium – Aging in Place: Planning's Role and Responsibilities - https://planning-org-uploaded-media.s3.amazonaws.com/legacy_resources/aicp/symposium/2012/pdf/aginginplace.pdf
4. National Shared Housing - <http://nationalsharedhousing.org/>
5. Town of Chester Community Housing Plan, Prepared by the LA Group - http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/chesterhousing.pdf
6. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/programs/home/
7. IHDA 2017 Annual Comprehensive Plan -- <https://www.ihda.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2017-Annual-Comprehensive-Housing-Plan-Final-Draft-1.pdf>
8. The American Planning Association - <https://www.planning.org/policy/guides/adopted/impactfees.htm>
9. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/lihtc.html>
10. U.S. Department of Energy -- <https://energy.gov/eere/wipo/weatherization-assistance-program-1>
11. Center for Land Use Education - https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/clue/Documents/PlanImplementation/Density_Bonus.pdf
12. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/programs/hcv/about/fact_sheet
13. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/htf/>
14. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/spring13/highlight3.html>
15. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/qct.html>
16. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness - <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/spring13/highlight3.html>
17. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=19790_200315.pdf
18. The Illinois Housing Development Authority - <https://www.ihda.org/developers/market-research/opportunity-areas/>
19. AARP -- <http://www.aarp.org/home-garden/livable-communities/info-11-2011/Aging-In-Place.html>



ECONOMIC VITALITY

“Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower. Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It is best to admit them quickly, and get on with improving your other innovations.”

—Steve Jobs

Economic Vitality CONTENTS

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E2.40	Strategy EV3.2—Identify Opportunities to Cut Costs and Increase Efficiencies in Service Delivery
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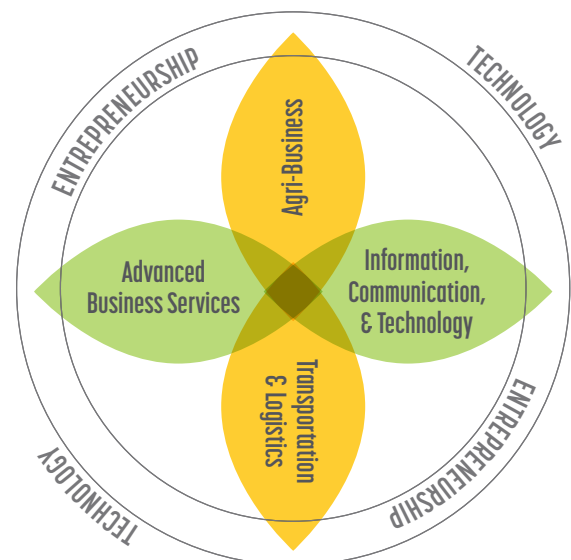
Historically, Normal and the BN region have had a very strong economy. In recent years, however, it has become increasingly clear that Bloomington-Normal needs to diversify its economy if it is to maintain that strength.

Bloomington-Normal's economy is well-positioned to continue to prosper for decades to come, but in a rapidly changing world, we can no longer rely on the same models that got us here. In the few years leading up to this planning process, the Mitsubishi Motors factory, which employed over 1,000 people from across Central Illinois, closed, though it has found a new buyer in Rivian Automotive. State Farm, the dominant local employer, expanded in other markets, and the insurance industry as a whole is facing questions about the impact of new technologies such as driverless cars. Public and private institutions within Illinois are experiencing the effects of the state fiscal crisis. In addition, formerly reliable sources of revenue, including the sales tax, appear to be in decline (in the case of the sales tax, due to seismic shifts in the retail sector). As our need for proactive economic development is growing, the entire landscape of economic development is shifting: Today's economic development requires more than tax cuts and incentives, as quality of place is at the forefront of both businesses' and workers' minds as they decide where to locate.

In recognition of these challenges, a wide variety of public and private stakeholders, including area businesses, economic development organizations, and local governments, came together to develop the BN Advantage economic development strategy. The resulting report, *Building the BN Advantage*, adopted in 2015, targeted five sectors—Entrepreneurship (not so much a single sector as a community culture spanning all sectors), Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Agribusiness and Food Processing, Transportation and Logistics, and Advanced Business Services—as the most suitable for economic development in our region, [See Figure EV1]. It also recommended the formation of a broad public-private coalition to implement the strategy, with a number of specific recommendations to be carried out by several task forces.

FIGURE EV1: BN Advantage Target Sectors

From a planning perspective, these sectors have both distinct and overlapping needs. All are linked by the need for a stronger entrepreneurial ecosystem, and all are being redefined by technology. See the Economic Vitality chapter in the Community Snapshot and Outreach Report for further discussion.



It is important to stress that economic development is inherently a regional enterprise. Normal is one of many active partners in BN Advantage. In the interest of not duplicating efforts, there are a number of important topics that this chapter does not address, which are being addressed in other venues by the appropriate task forces.



But this plan is about Normal, and the aim of this chapter is to identify what the Town can do to further the overall strategy while promoting its own fiscal sustainability. It suggests policies to position Normal to complement, and where appropriate to lead, these economic development efforts. Because it is Normal’s plan, it consciously follows Vision 2040, which identified basic requirements to support an innovative and diverse economy and noted technology as one of the two key “supporting frameworks” that should be central to Normal’s approach to governance.

To embrace innovation and build a stronger, more diverse economy, this chapter calls for Normal to foster a rich entrepreneurial ecosystem rooted in the creative economy, small and local businesses, and a strong local food system. It calls for the Town to play a key role in the development of an Innovation District centered on Illinois State University (ISU), Uptown Normal, and Advocate BroMenn and bolstered by major regional actors such as State Farm and COUNTRY Financial. An exemplar of place-based economic development, this district would serve as a regional hub for the entrepreneurial community and a proving ground for civic innovation.

As technology redefines every aspect of our society, Normal should become a Smart City with a thriving ICT sector and an open, proactive acceptance of disruptive innovation; modernize its operations and services through smart urban systems and enable community-wide connectivity through high-quality technology infrastructure; and rethink its approach to planning and land use for its economic centers.

Finally, sensible growth policies, tax and fee structures that are aligned with the Vision, more efficient service delivery, and innovative funding and financing mechanisms should be deployed to help the Town meet new challenges and continue to prosper in the future.

Connection to the Vision

Supporting Framework: Technology

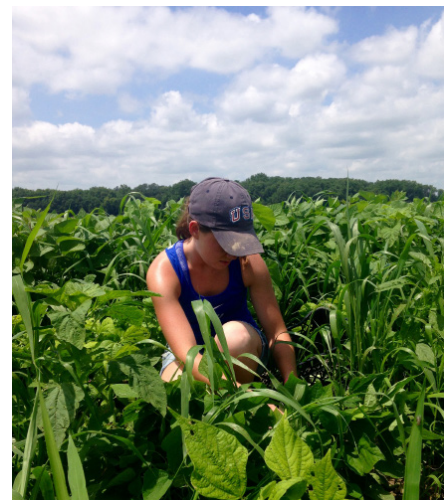
Core Value 2: Economy. Ours will be an innovative and diverse economy in 2040 that has grown from what it was in 2016.

GOALS

Goal EV1: Normal will be a hotspot for startups and local businesses, making the Town a key driver positioning the BN region as an innovation and entrepreneurship hub.

Goal EV2: Incorporate “Smart City” thinking in all aspects of the town and community building.

Goal EV3: Employ innovative policies, financial tools, and practices adapted to the paradigm shifts affecting municipalities and their finances.



Goal EV1: Become a hotspot for startups and local businesses, making the Town a key driver positioning the BN region as an innovation and entrepreneurship hub.

BN Advantage emphasized the need to foster entrepreneurship and diversify our economic base. Entrepreneurship is not a single sector, but rather a mode of doing business characterized by innovation and risk-taking by individuals or small, tight-knit teams. While entrepreneurship is associated with technology, it can be nurtured within many sectors. Like other businesses, entrepreneurs come in different sizes, from a self-employed person working out of his or her basement to a burgeoning enterprise employing several hundred people. Understanding and catering to the needs of entrepreneurs—some of which are common to all entrepreneurs and some of which vary by industry, size, and the types of goods and services they produce—is critical to creating a vibrant startup culture in our community.

While there are useful guidelines for communities to foster entrepreneurship, there are no prescribed solutions. Successful startup communities feature original and future-oriented thinking, collaborative partnerships, and vibrant places that facilitate innovation through a mix of formal and informal interactions.



Positive Contributors

- Anchor Institutions: State Farm Insurance, COUNTRY Financial, Rivian, medical centers, and other major businesses
- Educational institutions: Illinois State University (ISU), Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU), Heartland Community College (HCC), Lincoln College and their many departmental resources
- ISU's new cyber-security major, supported by State Farm Insurance
- Unit #5 high schools entrepreneurship class
- Existing partnerships among Town, ISU, and HCC
- Networking/programs: TEDxNormal, 1Million Cups, meetups, hackathons
- SlingShot co-working space in Uptown Normal (Launch Pad and start up box in Bloomington)
- Partnership between Town of Normal and Microsoft
- Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at IWU
- Uptown redevelopment efforts
- Free Wi-Fi in Uptown (Up to 1 GHz during festivals and celebrations)
- Increasing local food culture and assets [see Map EV1]
- Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) and multiple broadband providers
- BNAdvantage Task Forces
- Rivian and other partners currently engaged in macro level conversations with the State of Illinois to have McLean County designated as a test zone for autonomous vehicles

Challenges

- Small entrepreneurial community and very little collaboration sometimes leading to missed opportunities
- Lack of data and information
- Existing incentives structured in favor of 20th-century economic development practices
- Lack of a forum for corporations and small businesses/entrepreneurs to coexist and cooperate (so that promoting one does not work against the others)

Indicators and Metrics

- Jobs by stages and where they are headquartered¹
 - Self-employed, 2–9 employees, 10–99 employees, 100–499 employees, 500+ employees
 - Resident versus Non-Resident businesses
- Jobs by types
- Unemployment levels
- Labor force
- Income levels
- Investments (angel investments, private equity, etc.)
- Patents²—U.S. Patents and Trademarks Office
- Sales
- Performance of the Innovation District

Partners

- Anchor Institutions: State Farm Insurance, COUNTRY Financial, Rivian, medical centers, and other major businesses
- Educational Institutions: ISU, HCC, IWU, Unit 5 schools
- Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT)
- Economic Development Council (EDC)
- Chamber of Commerce
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC)
- CIRBN
- University of Illinois Extension
- Local entrepreneurs and venture capitalists
- Local developers
- Land Connection (non-profit organization in Champaign advancing local food efforts)
- Local farmers

A woman wearing a knit hat and glasses is looking at a laptop in a field. The background is a grassy field with some plants. The entire image has a yellow tint.

Strategy EV1.1—Support Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

- EV1.1a Define Industries That Make Up BN Region’s Creative Economy
- EV1.1b Create and Maintain a Comprehensive Inventory of All Small Businesses (Q)
- EV1.1c Improve Access to Affordable Spaces
- EV1.1d Engage in Constant Communication with the Small Business Community
- EV1.1e Reduce Bureaucratic Barriers
- EV1.1f Make Small-Business-Related Information Easily Accessible
- EV1.1g Promote “Buy Local” Culture
- EV1.1h Support Normal’s Artistic and Cultural Heritage
- EV1.1i Increase Access to Financing for Entrepreneurs

Strategy EV1.2—Create an Innovation District

- EV1.2a Assemble a Working Group to Complete an Innovation District Audit and Formally Create an Innovation District (Q)
- EV1.2b Create a Place That Fosters Innovation
- EV1.2c Support ISU as the Convener and Knowledge Partner to Drive Innovation in This District
- EV1.2d Encourage Advocate BroMenn to Help Drive Health-Related Innovation
- EV1.2e Pull in Agencies and Organizations Across the Community

Strategy EV1.3—Develop a Strong Local Food Economy

- EV1.3a Create a Local Food System Plan for BN and McLean County (Q)
- EV1.3b Create a Local Food Council to Assist with Bridging the Gaps in the Local Food Eco-System
- EV1.3c Create a Food Innovation District (FID)
- EV1.3d Cultivate Food Entrepreneurship
- EV1.3e Ensure that Codes and Ordinances Are Local-Food Friendly (Q)

Strategy EV1.4—Reduce Economic Inequality and Promote Opportunity for All Residents

Strategy EV1.1—Support Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

Relevant Definitions and Information

Entrepreneurs take on new and innovative ideas that involve high risks and potentially high rewards. **A small business owner** usually takes on a venture that has been tried and tested. Both have a lot in common, especially in the early stages.

Creative economy refers to industries that lie at the crossroads of arts, culture, and technology. While there is no standard list of industries that fit this term, most economic studies attempting to quantify this sector analyze advertising, architecture, broadcasting, crafts, cultural, design, fashion, film, fine arts, printing, publishing, and software engineering. *The Creative Economy in Illinois Report*¹ also included culinary arts in this category, reflecting that industry's high concentration in Illinois. Most workers in the creative sector tend to be entrepreneurial in nature and self-employed. Along with being an economic engine in and of itself, the creative economy is also critical to the vibrancy and overall quality of life in the community.



FIGURE EV2: McLean County Businesses

Businesses by Type	2014	2015
All	7,800	7,500
Resident	77.1%	77.3%
Nonresident	14.3%	13.7%
Noncommercial	8.6%	9.0%
Jobs by Stages		
All	145,600	134,400
Self-Employed (1)	0.6%	0.6%
One (2–9)	13.6%	13.8%
Two (10–99)	27.2%	29.5%
Three (100–499)	13.4%	15.4%
Four (500+)	45.3%	40.8%
Jobs Change		
Gained	25,100	6,500
Lost	6,800	17,700
Net Change	18,300	-11,300
Sales/Revenue		
All	\$23B	\$21B
Sales per Employee	\$157,000	\$156,000
Sales per Business	\$2.9M	\$2.8M

Important observations from this data include:

- The number of businesses and jobs in McLean County declined from 2014 to 2015.
- The percent of “resident” businesses—meaning businesses headquartered in the County—held steady (or gained minimally), while the percentage of “non-resident” businesses—those headquartered elsewhere but with a presence in McLean County—declined slightly.
- Almost all the jobs lost during this time are attributed to establishments employing over 500 people. Some of this job loss could be due to a major restructuring at State Farm. Small businesses (those employing under 500) retained their share.

Small and local businesses are the backbone of our economy. While most people acknowledge this fact, there is surprisingly very little understanding about the types of small businesses and their needs.

FIGURE EV2 Definitions

All

- The ALL indicator compares the total number of businesses for the years chosen.
- A business (establishment) is an economic unit that produces goods or services at a single physical location that is verified (direct phone contact to isolate and enhance the quality of micro establishments) as “in-business.” Following the individual establishment anywhere in the U.S. is what enables YE to track business performance through time at such a granular level. There are over 43 million businesses represented in YE.

Resident

- The RESIDENT indicator compares a standalone business or one that reports to another business located in the same region.
- YE makes the distinction between RESIDENT and NONRESIDENT business types because local businesses typically have more influence on job creation than businesses with out-of-state headquarters. NONCOMMERCIAL businesses are primarily found in governments, and a majority have no sales.

Nonresident

- The nonresident-businesses indicator compares establishments that have headquarters out-of-region.
- YE makes the distinction between RESIDENT and NONRESIDENT business types because local businesses typically have more influence on job creation than businesses with out-of-state headquarters. NONCOMMERCIAL businesses are primarily found in governments, and a majority have no sales.

Noncommercial

- The NONCOMMERCIAL indicator compares educational institutions, post offices, government agencies and nonprofit organizations.
- NONCOMMERCIAL businesses are primarily found in governments, and a majority have no sales. Some hospitals and other health related businesses report as non-profit and are found here reporting sales.

EV1.1a—Define Industries That Make up BN Region’s Creative Economy

This includes inventorying contributing businesses within the region, establishing a baseline and tracking progress over time. (Q)

EV1.1b—Create and Maintain a Comprehensive Inventory of All Small Businesses (Q)

EV1.1c—Improve Access to Affordable Spaces

Free/affordable spaces supported by programming can greatly enhance the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. Such spaces could include co-working spaces, incubators and accelerators.

- Work with area anchor institutions to identify space and other resources within their facilities to incubate and accelerate new businesses.
- Foster the pop-up economy to allow budding entrepreneurs, particularly retail, to test the market for their products. (Q)
 - Example: MEMobile³ program in Memphis, Tennessee is encouraging the small and local businesses on wheels.
- Increase the inventory of live/work space and consider relaxing the regulations within economic centers to accommodate appropriate residential development.
- Relax regulation on home occupations to encourage entrepreneurship. (Q)

Steve Jobs (along with fellow electronics enthusiast Steve Wozniak, who did not live on the premises) built the prototype for the first generation Apple computer in his parents’ garage. Such a venture could potentially be illegal (and shut down based on a neighbor’s complaints) according to the current home occupation regulations. While the Town is not alone in heavily regulating home occupations, ordinances such as this should be rewritten to better reflect today’s knowledge-based economy. Urbana, Illinois,¹ which has one of the most progressive home occupations regulations in Illinois, can serve as an example.

EV1.1d—Engage in Constant Communication with the Small Business Community

Identify their needs and challenges. Maintain clear documentation of those needs. Consider these needs while devising future economic incentive packages.

EV1.1e—Reduce Bureaucratic Barriers

Seek assistance from small businesses, preferably by type, to identify regulatory barriers that are burdensome. Request assistance from small businesses for examples of other communities, preferably in Illinois where the same state laws apply, that effectively addressed the issues they would like to see addressed here. Use those examples, where feasible, to make the Town’s codes and ordinances more small-business friendly.

EV1.1f—Make Small-Business-Related Information Easily Accessible

Please note: at the time of this writing, the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is in transition. Once it is up and running, they may be better positioned to lead or assist with many actions identified here at a regional level.

- Create a comprehensive small business portal including resources and a checklist of all regulatory processes (e.g. occupancy certificate, liquor license) by businesses type. Make it easily available on the Town’s website (www.normal.org/business). (Q)
- Create an online business-licensing portal. (Q)
 - Explore opportunities to partner with the Economic Development Council (EDC) and BN Advantage and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to create a one-stop-shopping webpage for all things entrepreneurial and small-business-related. Such a webpage will seamlessly integrate the Town’s licensing portal with a regional online business-licensing portal that spans across all regulatory bodies.
- Make sure the business page on the Town’s website (www.normal.org/business) has a clearly marked and easily accessible section for small businesses and entrepreneurs. (Q)

EV1.1g—Promote “Buy Local” Culture

In recognition of the positive economic impacts on the community of buying local, in 2011 the Town adopted a local preference purchasing policy. Nearly five years after its adoption, the Town can take additional steps to further the intent of the policy by evaluating its effectiveness.

- Audit the percentage of local purchases and online purchases to the Town’s total purchases and its trend annually. (Q)
- Set reasonable targets to increase the amount of local purchases.

EV1.1h—Support Normal’s Artistic and Cultural Heritage

[See Community Identity & Public Places Element.]

EV1.1i—Increase Access to Financing for Entrepreneurs

[See Goal EV3: Employ innovative policies, financial tools, and practices adapted to the paradigm shifts affecting municipalities and their finances]

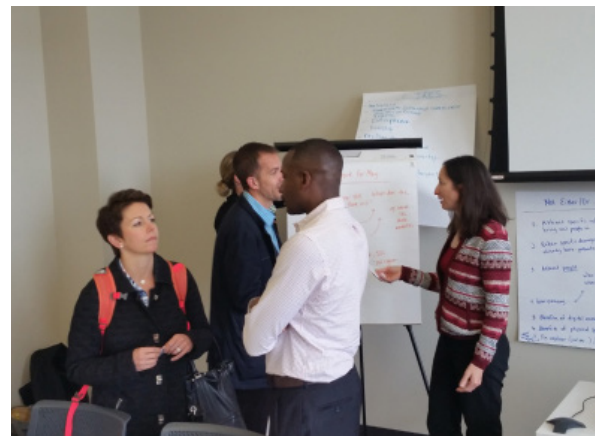
Strategy EV1.2—Create an Innovation District

Innovation Districts reflect a shift away from physical isolation and move toward open innovation as well as a growing desire among workers for livable, walkable, and connected places. These districts seek to cluster anchor institutions, startup companies, housing, retail uses, well-maintained public places, round-the-clock activity, and opportunities for social interaction—all in an urban context that offers multimodal transportation and state-of-the-art broadband service.

EV1.2a—Assemble a Working Group to Complete an Innovation District Audit and Formally Create an Innovation District (Q)

The Town of Normal should work with the BN Advantage leadership team to assemble and task a working group specifically to audit and create an Innovation District. *[See Map EV1 for proposed boundaries and Appendix for an Innovation District audit template.]*

- “Eds and Meds” are the two key pillars that support the Town’s (and the BN region’s) economy. High levels of participation from ISU and Advocate BroMenn will be key to the success of this Innovation District.
- The Innovation District working group should at a minimum include representatives from the three leading institutions (Town, ISU, and Advocate BroMenn), financial institutions, venture capitalists, local entrepreneurs, and other regional entities.



MAP EVI: Innovation District



Education

Metcalf Lab School.....	1
Studio Teach.....	2
Milner Library.....	3
Normal Public Library.....	4
Stevenson Center.....	5
CVA.....	6
SMACC Lab.....	7
Innovation Consulting Community*.....	8
University High School.....	9
Illinois Wesleyan University.....	10
Small Business Development Center.....	11

Entrepreneurial Center

Means Center for Entrepreneurship (State Farm Hall of Business).....	12
Slingshot Co-Working.....	13

Health

Community Health Care Clinic.....	14
Advocate BroMenn.....	15

Science

GEOMAP.....	16
Science Lab Building.....	17

Opportunity

Vacant Lot.....	18
Vacant Lot.....	19
Vacant Lot.....	20
Vacant Lot.....	21
Vacant Lot.....	22
One Uptown Mixed-Use Residential.....	23
Uptown Station.....	24
Proposed Uptown South.....	25
Unit 5 Underutilized Property.....	26

*Note: The proposed Innovation District boundaries could be expanded south along the Main Street corridor towards Downtown Bloomington for this to become a regional project in collaboration with City of Bloomington, Illinois Wesleyan University, and others.

EV1.2b—Create a Place That Fosters Innovation

- Make the Innovation District the pilot site for the Town’s Civic Innovation Lab [*See EV2.1c Establish a Civi Innovation Lab.*].
- Partner with the area’s anchor institutions to explore the potential of an Incubator/Accelerator in the space designated for office uses in Uptown 2.0.
- Streamline land use, zoning, and urban design standards to increase predictability for development. (Q)
- Prioritize bike, pedestrian, and transit improvements in this district.
- Explore opportunities for making transit stops multi-functional—potentially works of art, icons for sustainability, charging stations, Wi-Fi hotspots, and digital signage.
- Enhance place-making efforts in this district, e.g. partner with ISU to 1) implement the recommendations of the Main Street Redevelopment Plan, and 2) partner with ISU and the railroads to beautify the Beaufort Street corridor.
- Test ideas using “pop-up” techniques in parking lots and other underutilized spaces.



This creative bus stop in Baltimore is part of an initiative called “Transit: Creative Placemaking with Europe in Baltimore.”
Source: Mmmm.tv

ISU Innovation Assets

Through the College of Business, **The Means Center for Entrepreneurship** supports entrepreneurship for ISU students, local high-school students, and the surrounding community. Its mission is to graduate well-prepared entrepreneurial students, encourage them to start new businesses, and support them through mentoring, networking, and funding. The center provides scholarships and an accelerator program, and it hosts an annual startup showcase.

The Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development dedicates itself to public service and global understanding. Each year the Stevenson Center matches its Fellows (graduate students with at least a year of prior development experience) with organizations for 11-month professional practice placements. With support from faculty and staff, these Fellows may also work with local organizations during the year of on-campus study prior to these internships. Additionally, the center provides workforce development services; data collection, management, and analysis support; and grant-writing training. The center collaborates with a range of organizations across the U.S., including AmeriCorps and Peace Corps.

The Social Media Analytics Command Center (SMACC), located in the College of Communication, is a specialized computer lab that analyzes public conversations from social media outlets, popular discussion forums, and major blogs and displays them as dynamic charts, graphs, word clouds, and other visualizations. It serves as a classroom, a research lab, a media war room, and a consultation studio. The School of Communication is developing curricula and programming to utilize the SMACC's capabilities to enhance the social media skillsets of majors such as Public Relations, Journalism, and Mass Media.

The Innovation Consulting Community (ICC) provides students with an opportunity to develop a creative mindset to propose innovative strategies and solutions to complex problems. While many ICC events are held in the State Farm Hall of Business, the ICC is powered by ISU students of all majors and years and a diverse group of faculty and staff from different disciplines and departments. Their projects are diverse. In one project, for example, students are identifying and evaluating local opportunities to use recycled glass in construction paving materials, overseen by Construction Management and

Environmental Health faculty. In another, students are performing an analysis titled "Promises and Pitfalls of Autonomous Vehicles: Implications for the Insurance Industry," with faculty from the Katie School of Insurance and Financial Services serving as the project mentors.

Through the Department of Geography, Geology, and the Environment, **GEOMAP** provides research support, training and outreach, and project consultation in applied geospatial analysis and mapping. Their mission is to support applied research such as Geographic Information Systems, the Global Positioning System, geo-visualization, and remote sensing to further understand environmental and social challenges facing Illinois. Regular GIS workshops are one example of the services that GEOMAP provides to the community.

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning was recently established to further strengthen ISU's commitment to its core value of civic engagement, in which institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) collaborate on the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity. The center provides numerous civic engagement opportunities, such as Alternative Breaks and Faith in Action. The Center creates new opportunities and coordinates with established civic engagement efforts to support in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. This Center is in the process of pursuing Community Engagement Elective Classification through Integrated Post-Secondary Education System (IPDES) administered through Carnegie Mellon University.

The Department of Agriculture's **Horticulture Center** encompasses 10 acres along Raab Road in Normal and is linked to the Constitution Trail. It provides a facility for both faculty and students to conduct research into the Illinois landscape and horticulture industry. Additionally, the center provides outreach and public demonstration through events offered throughout the year. Plans for future development include a building to house classrooms, offices, labs, and greenhouses.

EV1.2d—Encourage Advocate BroMenn to Help Drive Health-Related Innovation

Many successful innovation districts have strong health partners. Barnes Jewish Hospital, for example, is an anchor institution in St. Louis's Cortex District. Although Advocate BroMenn is not a research hospital like Barnes Jewish, it still has innovation potential as a renowned regional medical institution, an affiliate of a major hospital system, and a major employer.

A number of factors are converging to drive health-related innovation in Bloomington-Normal, including demographic shifts; educated and proactive customers willing to embrace active and healthy lifestyles; and community health priorities to reduce obesity, improve access to health care, and address mental health issues. Technology is another key factor. Health care, like all sectors, has seen the emergence of a number of disruptive technologies in recent years. For example, the sector-wide shift toward Value-Based Care, propelled by the interrelated factors of consumer demand, regulation (primarily the Affordable Care Act), and provider efficiency/effectiveness, has led to rapid adoption and integration of technologies like mobile health and tele-medicine, electronic health records, portals and dashboard technologies, and wearable technologies. These have had a major effect on the health care landscape, and more disruptive technologies will continue to cause further rapid changes in the industry [See Figure EV3: Disruptive Technologies Impacting the U.S. Health Care Sector].

FIGURE EV3: Disruptive Technologies Impacting the U.S. Health Care Sector⁸

1. Artificial intelligence (AI)

Software algorithms able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence

Digitized supply chain, efficient billing, accelerated R&D

2. Augmented reality (AR)

Virtual additions to the physical world to change the user experience

Fitness and wellness gaming apps, guided tours of grocery aisles, surgical guidance

3. Blockchain

Distributed electronic ledger that can record and confirm transactions securely

Consumer identity management, Medicare and Medicaid fraud prevention, personal health data protection

4. Drones

Pilot-free vehicles and devices

Digitized supply chain, delivery of healthcare goods to consumers, emergency and disaster response

5. Internet of Things (IoT)

A connected network of objects that collect and exchange data

Inventory control, care coordination, remote patient monitoring, digital supply chain, digitized operations

6. Robots

Machines or virtual agents that automate, augment or assist human activities

Digital supply chain, remote patient monitoring and care, digital behavioral health services

7. Virtual Reality (VR)

Interactive simulation of a 3-D image or complete environment

Patient distraction, stress relief, medical school education tools, consumer and clinician training, scenario planning

8. 3D Printing

Additive manufacturing techniques used to create three-dimensional objects based on digital models by layering or "printing" successive layers of materials

Customized implants, prosthetics and transplants, distributed supply chain, on-demand inventory

ADVOCATE BROMENN INNOVATION

Advocate BroMenn partners with OSF, area higher education institutions, the McLean County Health Department, and other public and private entities to implement projects that will improve the health outcomes of the community.

- Participating actively in the **BN Advantage strategy** at leadership and task force levels to move the region forward
- Partnering with OSF on the **Community Health Care Clinic** and **Community Cancer Center** operations
- Partnering with OSF, McLean County Health Department, and United Way of McLean County to create and implement the community's first joint **Community Health Plan**
- Partnering with the Town of Normal to launch **Bike Share 309**, the community's first bike share program
- Partnering with McLean County and others in the **White House's Data-Driven Justice Initiative** to improve behavioral health
- Engaging in several long-standing partnerships with area higher education institutions including sponsoring an **Endowed Professorship at ISU's Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN)**
- Supporting **Young Hearts for Life**, a program where free electrocardiogram (EKG) screenings are provided to high school students to determine if there is a risk of sudden cardiac death. More than a thousand students in our region have been screened, and several students have been identified with severe risk for sudden cardiac death.

As a hospital affiliated with the larger Advocate system, the BroMenn Medical Center is better able to keep pace with the rapid innovation in the health care sector. Big data and data analytics are being used to understand population health, while electronic record keeping, dashboards and portals and tele-health are being used to improve access for clinical services in a cost effective manner. They also employ cutting edge technologies like robots and innovative training methodologies to improve clinical/patient outcomes. The list below highlights how technology has influenced health care right here at home:

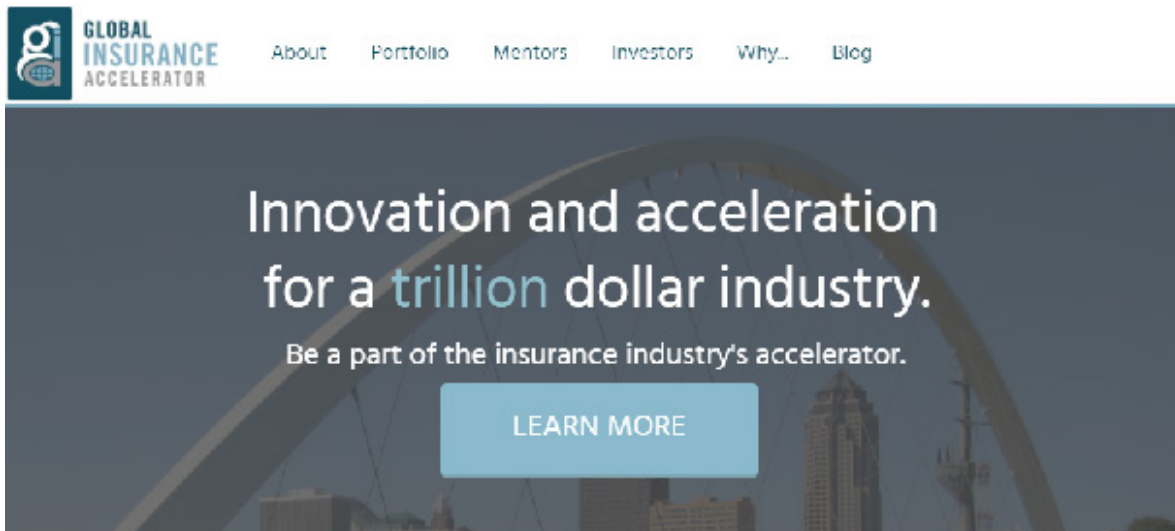
- **daVinci Robotic Surgery** (used for Gynaecology (GYN), Urology and General Surgery cases)
- **TruD Ultraviolet Robotic Cleaning System**—use of ultraviolet lights to kill germs and clean operating rooms and patient rooms

- **Hyperbaric Oxygen Chambers**—used for patients in the Wound Clinic
- **eICU (Electronic Intensive Care Unit)**—Located in Chicago, the eICU is staffed by a critical care physician who can monitor the ICU patients at each Advocate hospital. There is also a camera in each patient room so the eICU physician can talk directly with the patient and the staff.
- **TelePsychiatry in the Emergency Department (ED)**—Through telemedicine, a camera in the ED enables a physician located in Chicago to talk with behavioral health patients in the ED and work with the local ED team to assess and recommend treatment.
- **Advocate Physician Partners (APP)**—Advocate has created a partnership with their physicians in a clinically integrated model to improve clinical/patient outcomes and reduce the total cost of care. Advocate has several examples with data that demonstrate results in terms of improved outcomes and lower cost.
- **InQuicker Scheduling for Immediate Care (and now being added to Primary Care Offices)**—With InQuicker, patients can go online and schedule an appointment electronically to be seen at either of BroMenn's two immediate care locations. This is being rolled out to their physician offices (similar to Open Table App for dining).
- **Advocate BroMenn Health & Fitness Center**—A “Techno Gym” is used to assess each member. Members work with a health coach to get a workout prescription encoded on a key, which is inserted into each machine to bring up their exercise information and log their current workout.
- Advocate BroMenn operates **Graduate Medical Education** programs to prepare physicians for three specialties: neurological surgery, neurology, and family practice. They also operate a Family Health Clinic on the hospital site. It is unusual for a community hospital like BroMenn to offer training in neurosurgery, but that was the first program started.

EV1.2e—Pull in Agencies and Organizations Across the Community

While the Town of Normal, ISU, and Advocate BroMenn will be the primary movers in the Innovation District, broader community buy-in will be necessary to ensure its success as a hub for innovation and economic growth. This will require participation from anchor institutions, major employers, service providers, and economic development organizations.

For instance, insurance and financial services, a major sector in Bloomington-Normal, are currently being disrupted by a number of macroeconomic forces, including the shift to autonomous vehicles. While this phenomenon can be construed as a threat to the sector and to communities like Bloomington-Normal, these changes also present numerous opportunities for innovation.



Global Insurance Accelerator in Des Moines, Iowa

Insurance carriers and financial services are the investors and mentors for entrepreneurs and are the driving forces of this accelerator.

<http://www.globalinsuranceaccelerator.com>

Strategy EV1.3—Develop a Strong Local Food Economy

As evidenced by the expansion of farm-to-fork operations like Epiphany Farms, local breweries like Destihl, and the opening of Green Top Grocery (the BN community’s first co-operative grocery store), there is a groundswell of demand for local foods here in Bloomington-Normal. Yet scaling up local food operations is very challenging in McLean County, predominantly because small family farmers and food entrepreneurs, who are at the core of the local food value chain, are competing against industrial agricultural systems. Transitioning even a portion of food-sector activity to local businesses can reap great economic, social, and health benefits for the local economy. Local food businesses and their employees are more likely to spend their money at other local businesses, which helps keep dollars within the community. Food is also one of the few sectors in today’s world that provides good jobs for people without high levels of education. The biggest challenge facing this sector is the understanding among traditional economic development actors (policy makers, bankers, economic development professionals, and developers) of its full economic impact.

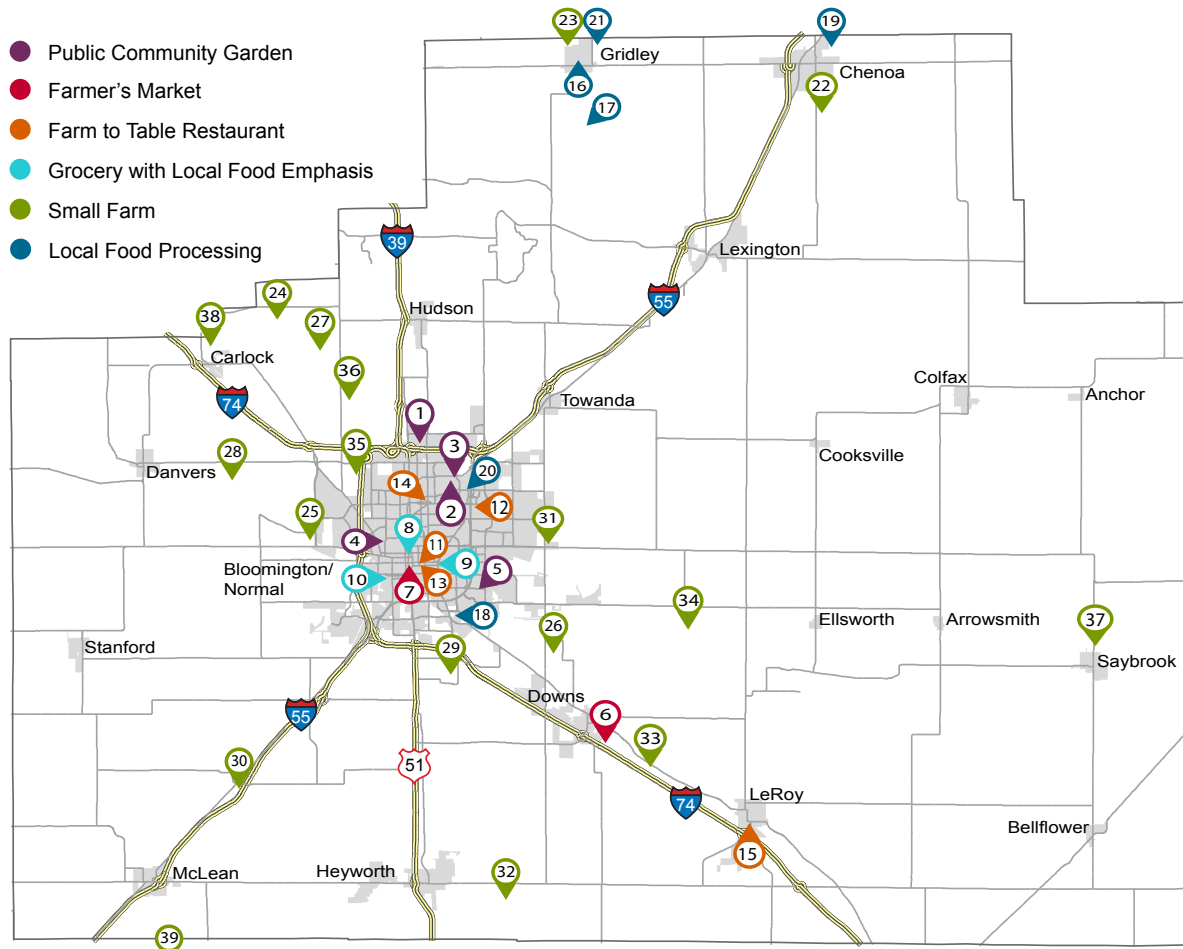
EV1.3a—Create a Local Food System Plan for BN and McLean County (Q)

Based on national trends, BN Advantage identified local food as one of the target sub-sectors under agri-business sector. However, it did not conduct a “deep dive” examination of the area’s local food ecosystem and hence provided no insight on assets or challenges. In order to understand this local industry, the BN area needs a comprehensive local food plan investigating the strengths, weaknesses, and market opportunities in all aspects of the local food ecosystem (production, consumption/retail, processing and distribution, and business development).

FIGURE EV4: Components of local food systems and their interrelationships



MAP EV2: McLean County Local Food Assets



Public Community Garden

Ironwood Park Community Garden.....	1
Refuge Food Forest	2
Community Garden at One Normal Plaza.....	3
Westside Community Garden	4
Bloomington Community Garden on Ireland Grove Road.....	5

Farmer's Market

Downs Village Market.....	6
Downtown Bloomington Association Farmers Market.....	7

Grocery with Local Food Emphasis

Common Ground Grocery.....	8
Green Top Grocery.....	9
Brown's Produce Store.....	10

Farm to Table Restaurant

Anju Above.....	11
Destihl Restaurant and Brew Works	12
Epiphany Farms.....	13
Medici.....	14
Old Bank Restaurant and Bar	15

Local Food Processing

Watershed Foods.....	16
Witzig Farm Meats	17
Bloomington Meats	18
Chenoa Locker, Inc.....	19
College Hills Meat Shop	20
Gridley Meats, Inc.....	21

Small Farm

Ackerman Certified Organic Farm	22
Appleridge Produce	23
Braffet Berry Farm	24
Browns Produce Farm	25
Cook Farm (CSA)*	26
Crump Family Gardens	27
Dearing Country Farms	28
Epiphany Farms*	29
Funks Grove Pure Maple Sirup*	30
Grani's Acres, LLC (CSA).....	31
Homestead Harvests.....	32
O'Rourke Family Farms.....	33
O'Rourke Family Garden*	34
Radar Family Farms*	35
Ropp Farms*	36
Susan's Secret Garden.....	37
Wettstein Organic Farm	38
PrairieErth Farm.....	39

* Contributes to agricultural tourism

After conducting limited research, McLean County Regional Planning has identified the following gaps, challenges, and opportunities in McLean County’s local food ecosystem:

- **Major gap:** Local farmers expressed the need for a local processing center. Such a center would help them wash, cut, can, and pre-package their greens and vegetables.
- **Challenge:** A few budding restaurateurs mentioned their difficulties navigating the McLean County Health Department regulations for commercial kitchens.
- **Opportunity:** Malting plant for various grains growing in McLean County, including barley
- **Opportunity:** Converting the currently underutilized commercial grade kitchen at Rivian’s facility as a kitchen incubator to foster culinary start-ups

The Town should consider working with local farmers and entrepreneurs to address the aforementioned gaps and challenges in order to capitalize on the opportunities.

Example: The City of Columbus and Franklin County, together with other partners, adopted a Local Food Action Plan⁹ in 2016 to increase coordination, access, education and grow the local economy.

EV1.3b—Create a Local Food Council to Assist with Bridging the Gaps in the Local Food Eco-System



Epiphany Farms Restaurant¹

“Farm to Fork” concept –by serving food grown on their own farm, the owners of Epiphany Farms link the meal to the land that produced it. Epiphany Farms also strives to educate the community about ethical, sustainable farming practices and grow the local food culture.



Green Top Grocery, the BN region’s first Cooperative Grocery Store, opened its doors in May 2017

EV1.3c—Create a Food Innovation District (FID)

Food Innovation District

Like other industry sectors, local food economies thrive in clusters called Food Innovation Districts (FIDs). FIDs are a land use concept based on the economic benefits of business clusters, which arise when related businesses locate in close proximity to each other. FIDs often include services such as markets, food business incubators, and facilities to serve common storage, packing, and distribution needs. By encouraging business collaboration, they provide important opportunities for product aggregation, information sharing, and partnering on events and market promotion. FIDs benefit from a location friendly to walkers, bicyclists, and transit riders. FIDs also assist in placemaking.¹

One Normal Plaza and the Normandy Village area could potentially become a FID. Characteristics of the area that make it a good fit include:

- Its proximity to Uptown and ISU and its accessibility by walking, biking and taking transit
- Historic and cultural aspects that contribute to the overall placemaking quality
- Area destinations including a private cooperative school, swimming school, offices and businesses that attract traffic from different parts of the community
- Ball fields in the area that attract and retain large groups of kids and families in one location for long periods of time

- The Refuge Food Forest, a diverse offering of fruits, nuts, and perennial vegetables, free for anyone in the community to harvest
- Availability of vacant/under-utilized properties (e.g., gymnasium building)
- Vacant/open space for pop-up opportunities
- Proximity to industrially zoned sites
- Along Route 66, community's historic and cultural corridor
- Along minor arterials
- Last but not least, the current owners of Normandy Village support the concept enthusiastically. Currently they are in the process of master planning their campus with the ultimate goal of creating a unique place that preserves history, incorporates local food, promotes art and culture, and contributes positively to the environment.

Potential concerns include the area losing its charm and character if traffic and noise issues increase for the surrounding neighborhoods.

Given the need for additional study in this area, a Sub Area Plan is recommended for this general area. Such a plan should take into consideration its locational assets and potential concerns along with the recommendations from the Normandy Village master plan, local food system plan, and opportunities to improve physical and visual connects between One Normal Plaza, Uptown, ISU, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

EV1.3d—Cultivate Food Entrepreneurship

Partner with institutions like University of Illinois Extension and local food entrepreneurs like Epiphany Farms and Green Top Grocery to provide non-financial incentives such as mentorship programs and other technical resources for local food entrepreneurs.

EV1.3e—Ensure That Codes and Ordinances Are Local-Food Friendly (Q)

[See Health & Sustainability Element: Strategy HS1.5—Provide Access to Healthy Food for All Members of the Community]

Strategy EV1.4—Reduce Economic Inequality and Promote Opportunity for All Residents

[See Goal HSA3: Reduce economic inequality and promote opportunity for all residents.]

Goal EV2: Incorporate “Smart City” thinking in all aspects of the Town and community building.

Smart Cities are those that can effectively use the power of data and technology to cater to the changing needs of its citizenry, solve current and future challenges, and create exciting new services. In a Smart City, the built environment can respond to the needs of its users and raise the “intelligence coefficient” of the city. Regulations connect city laws to new digital realities and innovation clusters to create jobs and vibrant economies. Leaders drive progress using public-private partnerships to invest in scalable projects. In the simplest terms, a Smart City embraces innovation to change the way government operates and delivers services. It is as much about the mindset as it is about technology.

Positive Contributors

- Town’s commitment toward technology and innovation exemplified by
 - Town of Normal/Microsoft Partnership
 - Town’s role in fostering a co-working space in Uptown
 - Free Wi-Fi in Uptown (up to 1 GHz during festivals and celebrations) and parks
- Existing partnerships between Town, ISU, and Heartland Community College
- Anchor institutions: State Farm Insurance, COUNTRY Financial, Rivian, hospitals, and other major businesses
- ISU’s new cyber-security major, supported by State Farm Insurance
- Uptown redevelopment efforts
- Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network and multiple broadband providers
- Normal Public Library Wi-Fi lending services

Challenges

- Cyber Security
- Rapid changes in technology
- Multiple service providers competing for the limited public rights-of-way
- Steep learning curve associated with technology, which will require proper training and support for staff
- Lack of data and information

Indicators and Metrics

- Number and type of Town government data sets 1) collected and 2) made available through an open data portal
- Tools/systems established within the Town government to 1) gather and analyze data and 2) measure/report/communicate those data
- Policy and administrative commitment towards Smart City strategies
 - Establishment of related policies
 - Budget dedicated for transitioning towards a Smart City
 - Staff alignment/dedicated teams to move the initiative forward

Partners

- ISU and other universities in Illinois (such as NIU) working on public sector innovation
- MCRPC
- McGIS
- Public-private partnerships (Microsoft, Google, Cisco, IBM, Siemens)
- Federal agencies (like Department of Energy and Department of Transportation)
- Think tanks like Bloomberg Foundation, Smart Cities Council and others
- Not-for-profits/foundations supporting local government technology and innovation (ex: USIGNITE, Code For America, Next Century Cities, National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA))



Strategy EV2.1—Lead by Example in Fostering the Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) Sector

- EV2.1a Create a Comprehensive Town Information Technology Master Plan
- EV2.1b Embrace Big Data, Data Mining, and Data Analytics
- EV2.1c Establish a Civic Innovation Lab
- EV2.1d Build an “i-Team” to Drive Technology Innovation

Strategy EV2.2—Prepare to Be Disrupted by Innovation

- EV2.2a Adopt a Policy Stance on Innovation that Embraces and Fosters Innovation While Prioritizing Market Fairness and Public Safety (Q)
- EV2.2b Increase Training and Education at All Levels (Q)
- EV2.2c Be Prepared to Transition

Strategy EV2.3—Build “Smart Urban Systems”

Strategy EV2.4—Reimagine Our Economic Centers

Strategy EV2.5—Build Quality Technology Infrastructure

- EV2.5a Create a Unified Regional Technology Plan
- EV2.5b Enable New Network Deployments in a Coordinated Fashion
- EV2.5c Facilitate the Availability of Wired Infrastructure or Conduits from the Street to the Building (Q)
- EV2.5d Document the Town’s Fiber Assets (Q)
- EV2.5e Capitalize on the Presence and Expansion of CIRBN

Strategy EV2.1—Lead by Example in Fostering the Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) Sector

EV2.1a—Create a Comprehensive Town Information Technology (IT) Master Plan

- With an emphasis on short-term (2020) and medium-term (2025) strategic actions, the IT master plan should address the software and technology needs of all aspects of municipal functions. [See Appendix for additional guidance.]

EV2.1b—Embrace Big Data, Data Mining, and Data Analytics

Relevant definitions and terms:

Big data is a term for data sets that are so large or complex that traditional data processing applications and software are inadequate to deal with them.

The 3 Cs and the 3 Ps of Big Data—Smart City Council

- **Collecting data**—deploying sensors in infrastructure and objects: much of this might be considered transactional data, while others may be voluntarily shared by individuals (crowd sourced).
- **Communicating data**—creating networks for working with collected data in real time.
- **Crunching data**—making sense of what’s available.
- **Presenting information**—making it understandable for people with a role in the system or domain.
- **Perfecting systems**—automating the process of adjusting or optimizing systems (typically envisioned as a remote manipulation of a system setting or mechanism).
- **Predicting phenomena**—using the large volumes of historical data to attempt to anticipate events such as inefficiencies, crises, or system failures, and to make decisions and take action on them in real-time.

While we entered the world of big data a decade or so ago, the majority of the focus thus far has been on the mechanics of collecting and storing the data. The emergence of the “Internet of Things (IoT),” where everything and everyone is connected and networked in complex ways, brought the 3 C’s and the 3 P’s of big data to the center stage. Many cities across the globe are actively seeking ways to harness the power of data and technology to build Smart Cities (or “Future Cities”).

- Adopt an open data policy. (Q)
- Consider obtaining What Works Cities Certification offered through the Bloomberg Foundation. This program provides technical assistance to help cities use data and evidence to improve results. [See Appendix for additional information on *Ten Actions To Implement Big Data Initiatives*.] (Q)
- Consider partnering with data scientists at ISU or other Illinois universities to analyze big data and assist with data-driven governing.
- Continue to push for innovation in the McLean County Geographic Information Systems (McGIS) consortium, in which the Town must remain an active partner. The Town should collaborate with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) and McGIS to develop and distribute data and information widely. Example: Loss of Census Long Form, and the related data on urban infrastructure, makes data-driven planning difficult for municipalities. The Town should coordinate with McGIS and its partners to track lost data such as housing information at the local level for planning purposes. (Q)

EV2.1c—Establish a Civic Innovation Lab

- Normal should join a small but growing list of cities in creating a Civic Innovation Lab (also called an Urban Lab) and make the Town an urban laboratory for innovation. Civic Innovation Labs are a relatively new tool that cities of all sizes are using to facilitate the use of public places to experiment with new technology through pilot programs, products, or services with an urban impact. This concept was originally seeded in 2008 in Barcelona, in the form of the Barcelona Urban Lab. The Barcelona lab has helped launch 18 pilots in the areas of lighting, smart meters, sustainable mobility, traffic controls, and much more. The Barcelona Office of Economic Growth estimates that ninety percent of the pilot participants have gone on to develop new, related businesses (I-teams report). Since then, several US Cities have opened Civic Innovation Labs. Boston’s Office of Urban Mechanics, Chicago’s Urban Labs, Los Angeles’s Tech Bullpen, and San Francisco’s Office of Civic Innovation are a few examples the Town can draw from.



Example: The University of Chicago Urban Labs

<http://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/about>

UChicago’s Urban Labs work to address issues of crime, education, health, poverty, and energy and environment. They partner with civic and community leaders to identify, test, and help scale the programs and policies that have the potential to solve community problems. An example of their work is their Chicago Bag Tax Study. In early 2017, the City of Chicago implemented a seven-cent tax on all paper and plastic checkout bags in order to reduce the use of disposable bags. The Energy and Environment Lab studied the effect of the tax and concluded that there was a forty percent decrease of disposable bag use and a decrease of thirty percent of those who choose to use a disposable bag at all. The lab is continuing to study the long-term effects of the tax on customers in Chicago.

EV2.1d—Build an “i-Team” to Drive Technology Innovation

Cities are in a unique position to bring about change that can transform citizen’s lives. However, they are constantly managing day-to-day responsibilities, putting out “fires,” and facing numerous other challenges that can prevent them from achieving transformative innovation. They also frequently lack the human/financial resources and organizational capacity to be innovative and take on bold ideas. Issues such as sustainability, social equality, smart urban systems, and other multi-faceted challenges that cross departmental and agency boundaries are much harder to tackle in standard management and “siloeed” operations.

To address these challenges and help unlock the innovation potential in the public sector, Bloomberg Philanthropies introduced a concept called “**i-teams**.” By using data-driven and outcome-oriented approaches, i-teams greatly reduce the risks associated with innovative work and are able to develop and implement effective solutions in the highest-priority areas.

Bloomberg Philanthropies tested the i-team approach with multi-year investments in five cities, with great results. These include Atlanta, Chicago, Louisville, Memphis, and New Orleans. According to their website, nearly 20 cities are now participating to solve their issues with creative solutions, including our neighbor Peoria, Illinois.

According to a report published by the Bloomberg and Nesta foundations, i-teams fall into one of four categories: creating solutions to solve specific challenges; engaging citizens, nonprofits, and businesses to generate new ideas; transforming the processes, skills and culture of government; or achieving wider policy and systems change. They are succeeding across a range of issues: reducing murder rates, making it easier to register a business, improving school performance, and boosting economic growth.

This report offered the following guidance based on the success of 20 teams from across the globe:

1. **The type of i-team you create should be driven by your ultimate goal**—whether that goal is to generate specific solutions, engage citizens, grow innovation capacity in the public sector, or encourage system-level change.
2. **Forge strong links to executive power inside government**, leveraging internal and external partnerships, resources, and insights to achieve goals.
3. **Build a team with a diverse mix of skills** and a combination of insiders and outsiders to the government.
4. **Develop a lean funding model** for the team itself, and attract secure funds from partners for implementation.
5. **Continually demonstrate and communicate the i-team’s unique value.**
6. **Employ explicit methods**, drawing on cutting-edge innovation skills and tools, alongside strong project management, to get work done.
7. **Have a bias toward action and aim for rapid experimentation**, combining early wins with longer-term impacts.
8. **Be clear on handovers early on**, tasking implementation and delivery to government.
9. **Relentlessly measure impacts**, quantify successes, and be sure to stop what isn’t working.
10. **Celebrate success and share credit.**

Strategy EV2.2—Prepare to Be Disrupted by Innovation

Effect of Disruptive Innovation on Cities

While technology and innovation fuel our economy, they are also capable of challenging our fundamental way of being and disrupting our economies. The convergence of several disruptive innovations, all driven to some degree by technology, is reshaping the economic landscape:

Online shopping is forcing us to rethink land use on a massive scale. Brick-and-mortar space requirements have begun shrinking as retailers have begun to adapt to the rapid growth of online shopping. This phenomenon has left an overabundance of auto-oriented shopping malls with vast, low-occupancy parking lots. Freight traffic has increased due to deliveries in residential areas. There is a real potential for drones entering the last-mile delivery space in the near future, bringing new opportunities and posing new threats.

The shared economy is upending traditional industries (such as taxi services and hotels) and local regulatory environments. Shared, pay-per-use mobility is challenging the model of personally owned vehicles. Shared housing is causing havoc in some cities while becoming an affordable housing solution in others. Some cities are resisting this change, others are embracing it, and a few are taking it a step further by actively participating in it themselves (e.g., cities sharing heavy equipment to cut costs).

The pop-up economy is a catch-all term for temporary economic ventures that “pop up” in the public realm, including pop-up shops, pop-up events, and even pop-up planning. Given its temporary nature, the risk in a pop-up undertaking is very low, and rewards are frequently high. Social media and the proliferation of apps such as Square that reduce equipment and technical costs, are supporting this trend. The pop-up model has proved attractive to entrepreneurs, restaurateurs, municipalities, nonprofits, and private citizens alike.

Driverless or autonomous cars are very close to becoming a reality. This technology alone has the potential to alter the physical, economic, and social landscapes of our communities. We are just beginning to understand the profound implications of this innovation on land use, community, and economic development. These systems will challenge every transportation policy and land use policy that exist in our city codes today.

Below are a few ways in which Normal can be prepared to be disrupted by innovation:

EV2.2a—Adopt a Policy Stance on Innovation That Embraces and Fosters Innovation While Prioritizing Market Fairness and Public Safety (Q)

EV2.2b—Increase Training and Education at All Levels (Q)

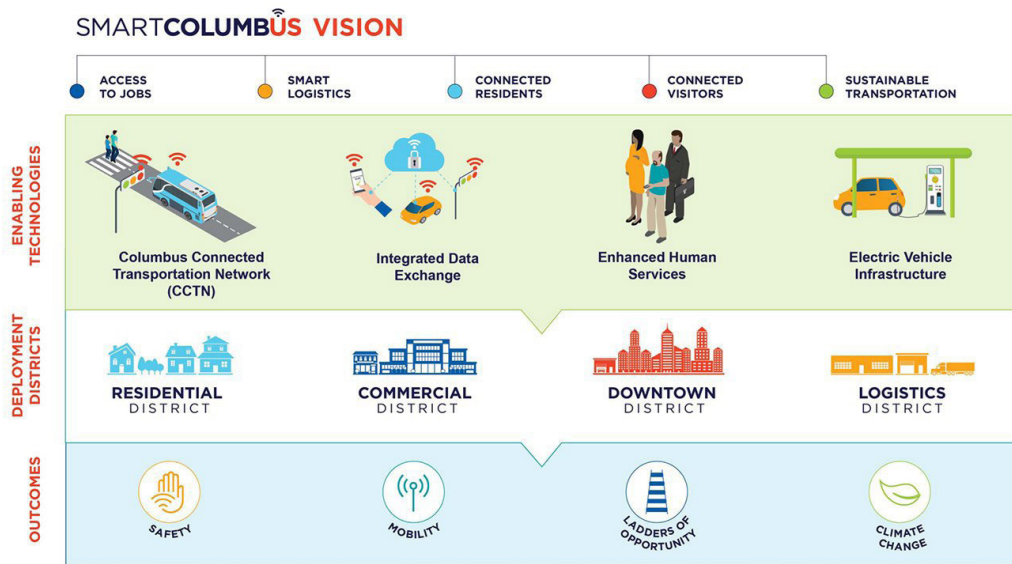
The Town Council, administration, department directors, and staff should follow the conversations about disruptive innovation technologies closely. The Town should lead or help shape those conversations where possible.

- Follow initiatives such as the Bloomberg Aspen Initiative on Cities and Autonomous Vehicles. (Q)
- Follow the work of Columbus, OH, a city that won \$40 million as part of the Smart Cities Challenge from the US Department of Transportation (USDOT). Seven other finalists for this award (Austin, Denver, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, Portland, and San Francisco) are also doing remarkable work and will make great case studies. (Q)
- Subscribe to newsletters and updates from think tanks like The Brookings Institute, Urban Land Institute, Smart Cities Council, and the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation, all of which are pushing forward urban innovation (both productive and disruptive). (Q)

- Encourage staff at all levels to attend Smart Cities or related training and conferences. (Q)

Example: Denver’s PEAK academy sends line-level staff to a multi-day intensive training on innovation. This allows for bottom-up innovation as well as buy-in for innovative ideas generated at the top.

Example: The City of Durham and Durham County in North Carolina use the Idea Lab to bring employees together regularly to build innovation capacity.
- Identify staff champions from various divisions and departments to drive innovation in their respective areas. Incentivize innovative thinking. (Q)



Smart Columbus Demonstration Projects

Source: Smart Cities. PDF presentation available on <https://www.columbus.gov/smartcolumbus/home>

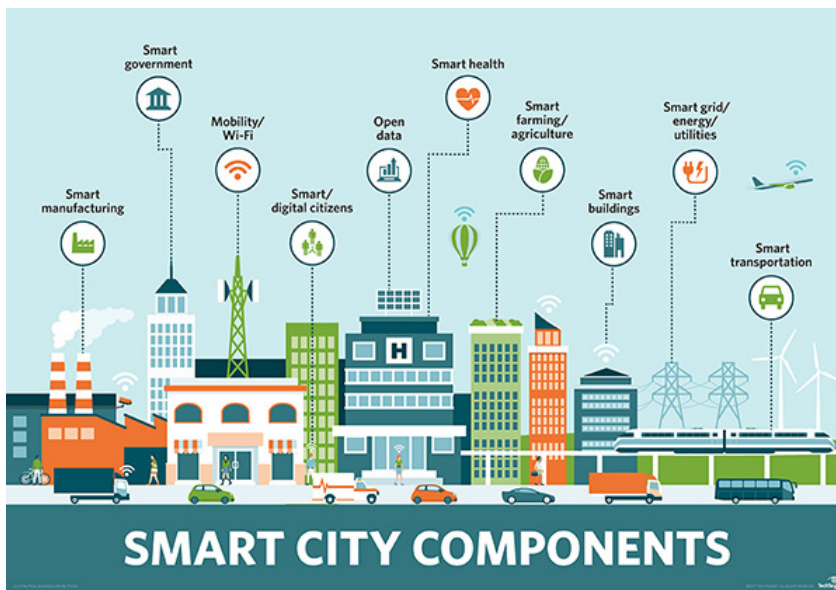
EV2.2c—Be Prepared to Transition

Traditionally, the public sector has studied issues thoroughly before taking action. There is also an expectation among members of the community of “permanency” with public sector projects, which makes it difficult to make rapid changes. That trend is changing across the globe. Major cities like New York are utilizing the “pop-up” strategy to test new planning ideas. Normal must bridge the gap between the current municipal culture and regulatory environment and the vision set forth in this document. The Town needs to embrace the words “temporary,” “pop-up,” and “pilot” to help test new regulations and techniques to achieve this vision.

- Consider hiring an information technology or telecommunications firm or expert on a retainer to advise the Town on disruptive technologies and related policy or technical challenges. Such outside expertise can help the Town find the right balance between regulation and innovation in a timely fashion. (Q)

Strategy EV2.3—Build “Smart Urban Systems”

In the pursuit of smarter, more responsive urban systems, local governments have partnered with startups and major technology companies to begin experimenting with technology, data, and IoT across all dimensions of urban life. These include buildings, energy systems, water and waste water systems, transportation, solid waste management, and street infrastructure. Building a “Smart Urban System” does not happen overnight. It requires a long-term commitment, a clear roadmap, measurable outcomes, and a deep understanding of challenges. Developing such a roadmap is beyond the scope of this planning process. However, this strategy should be one of the key components of the Town’s Information Technology Master Plan [See action EV2.1a—Create a Comprehensive Town Information Technology Master Plan]. The “Smart Cities Readiness Guide” published on the Smart Cities Council Website¹⁰ is a highly useful resource.



Source: Cisco Smart City

Strategy EV2.4—Reimagine Our Economic Centers

As discussed throughout this chapter, technology and innovation are challenging many things from the past and blurring the lines among living, working and playing. The vast square footage of space that was once needed for retail is no longer needed at the same level due to online sales. Manufacturing today involves advanced and high-tech computerized production equipment and not the smoke stack industries that defined prior eras. These and other transformations challenge us to rethink how we plan for and design our built environments, including commercial, office, and industrial centers. [See Centers Chapter in the Planning Framework Section for additional discussion and actions.]

Strategy EV2.5—Build Quality Technology Infrastructure

The availability and accessibility of a high-speed, reliable, open, affordable, efficient, resilient, and secure broadband network are the backbone for smart city initiatives. To provide such a network, a community must understand its existing assets and bridge gaps in infrastructure.

Through the limited research conducted in this planning process, it became clear that the BN area has some strong technology assets but lacks a good understanding of the region's gaps and needs. The public sector and educational institutions banded together and created the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) in 2014. Since then, CIRBN has been providing high-speed broadband to K-12 school districts, healthcare, public safety, government, not-for-profit, and commercial institutions. MetroNet, the newest private service provider, offers gigabit broadband speeds for residential customers. While these are some examples of positive contributions, the lack of a unified approach to enhancing technology assets leads to missed opportunities.

Example: When MetroNet recently began installing a ubiquitous fiber optic network throughout the community, there was no community conversation about their bandwidth leasing policies to public entities. Such conversations have the potential to establish public-private partnerships for communitywide Wi-Fi services, which is becoming increasingly common. Another example: There is little understanding of the digital-divide issues in Normal. Normal Public Library leases Wi-Fi hot spots to people who do not have access to the Internet at home. Based on their popularity, one can assume that there is a need, but it has not been quantified.

Technology is no longer a luxury. It is one of the critical utilities of the 21st century. Like other utility systems such as water, power, gas and sewer, it must be carefully planned, coordinated, and installed everywhere.

EV2.5a—Create a Unified Regional Technology Plan (Q)

Engage stakeholders from the public, private, educational, and non-profit sectors. Such a plan should inventory existing assets, carefully assess gaps and needs, and strategically plan for next steps. With cyber-security being one of the biggest challenges of our times, the regional technology plan should identify and amply address cyber-security concerns and lay out a roadmap for how municipalities can protect their privacy while increasing their digital footprint.

EV2.5b—Enable New Network Deployments in a Coordinated Fashion

- Consider a “dig-once policy” to facilitate placement of conduits underground. These policies open streets and rights-of-way to utility construction when related projects are underway, creating uniformities and efficiencies in network construction by giving multiple entities the opportunity to place their facilities. Such policies also protect roads and sidewalks from frequent, life-shortening cuts and minimize other disruption from utility construction. (Q)

- Work with Ameren, Corn Belt, and telephone companies that own poles in the community to help establish a “make-ready” process and prepare the poles for the new fiber bundle attachments. The Fiber to the Home Council advocates for state and local governments to “condition use of public rights-of-way to require incumbent users of this space to share their poles, ducts, and conduits on a non-discriminatory basis and at reasonable (cost-based) rates, terms, and conditions.”
- Construct a uniform conduit bank with sufficient capacity for all current and future providers, particularly in dense urban areas.
- Allow use of public facilities to expand broadband networks.

EV2.5c—Facilitate the Availability of Wired Infrastructure or Conduits from the Street to the Building (Q)

Entry into a building or development is one of the most significant barriers to new network providers.

- Similar to the conduits provided for other utilities, require by code: conduits for digital infrastructure from the public rights-of-way to a demarcation point in the building, and then internal, standards-compliant building cabling or cable pathways in new construction or major renovations. Such a requirement would reduce costs and enable speedy deployment. Example: the City of Sandy, Oregon has an ordinance requiring developers to put the conduit all the way to the property and deed that to the City.
- Alternatively, require the developers or building owners to install fiber as part of a new building or renovation. This strategy will be more meaningful after the Town adopts a standard for fiber installation. Connectivity standards adopted by Loma Linda, California may serve as a good example for this model. The new building code requires both residential and commercial new developments to equip buildings with a fiber optics interface and copper cabling throughout the building.

EV2.5d—Document the Town’s Fiber Assets (Q)

This should be done regionally as part of the Technology Plan. However, the Town can get started on documenting fiber assets in geographic information systems (GIS), including fiber routes, termination points, splice points, poles, duct banks, and access and end points of each strand. A comprehensive and up-to-date inventory of all the conduits, and documentation of their condition, intended use, and other aspects, must be updated periodically. Once these assets are inventoried, GIS analysis tools can be used for optimal fiber assignment, splicing of a route, and ability to generate scenarios for future planning.

EV2.5e—Capitalize on the Presence and Expansion of CIRBN

As one of the key founding partners of CIRBN, the Town of Normal continues to be a key stakeholder in the management and operations of the network. CIRBN’s business model is to serve commercial and institutional partners with no current plans to expand to residential customers although it has the flexibility to partner with others to provide both wired and wireless services to residential customers.

Town staff can work with CIRBN to:

- Expand access to high-speed Wi-Fi in public places such as Uptown, parks, and other city facilities.
- Identify projects for fiber network expansion annually as part of Capital Improvement Planning.

Prioritize expansion on the West Side where its current footprint is smaller.

- Include conduits for fiber while making other street/site improvements.
- Allow CIRBN to use Town infrastructure and facilities to deliver broadband services. (Q)

[See Strategy IP 1.5 for more specific expansion recommendations.]

Goal EV3: Employ innovative policies, financial tools, and practices adapted to the paradigm shifts affecting municipalities and their finances.

As outlined in the existing conditions report, the Town has successfully deployed a variety of financial tools to improve the quality of place and life for its residents, while also demonstrating consistent fiscal responsibility.

However, in the era of dwindling resources and increased service expectations, municipalities across the nation are experiencing major changes in their finances. In Illinois, these challenges are exaggerated by the political and financial challenges in state government. At this juncture, the Town should think critically about how to influence change in internal culture, reset expectations, realign resources, and increase efficiencies. The Town should consider questions such as:

- *Are fees and incentives aligned with a long-term vision for the community?*
- *Are investments benefiting a select group or neighborhood? If yes, how can fees or taxes be better targeted?*
- *Can we monetize existing city assets?*
- *How can Town departments be incentivized to operate more efficiently?*
- *How can public dollars be used effectively to leverage private investment?*
- *How can we revise existing funding/financing tools to increase their success and relevance in the 21st century?*
- *Can we create hybrid funding models by blending capital and operational budgets?*
- *How can we use new technologies to fundamentally rethink municipal finances?*

Answers to all these questions are critical to achieving this goal.

Positive Contributors

- Relatively healthy economy and tax base, when compared to surrounding Illinois communities
- Relatively diverse sources of revenue
- Town's fiscal health planning and regular monitoring of key financial indicators
- Town's AAA bond rating
- Existing financial tools (Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Enterprise Zone, sales tax rebates, property tax rebates)
- Development and redevelopment agreements
- Steady grants such as Community Development Block Grants
- Streamlined and transparent Capital Investment Planning (CIP) process
- Existing funding for Town's Information Technology (IT) Department and capital improvement budget for technology improvements

Challenges

- Political and financial issues at the state level
- Shrinking revenues (federal funding, dwindling sales taxes, etc.)
- Limited incentives
- Limitations with financial software and systems to easily pull reports specific to small geographies
- Misalignment of revenue sources with consumer behavior; e.g. the Town's water revenue depends on the quantity of water used; however, consumers are also encouraged to conserve water.
- Lack of strong regional collaborations (multi-level, multi-government)
- Organized incentives primarily geared towards attracting big businesses
- Lack of incentives at the state level
- Lack of data on online sales


Indicators and Metrics

- Trends in major revenue streams
- Diversity of revenue stream
- Online sales data (no good data source but is important)
- Trends in EAV (lagging indicator)
- Tax rates
- Permits

Partners

- Several ISU Departments like the Stevenson Center for economic analysis modeling and the SMACC lab for social media analysis





Strategy EV3.1—Adopt Fiscally Sustainable Growth Policies, Including Tax and Fee Structures That Are Aligned with the Overall Vision

- EV3.1a Re-Evaluate City Codes and Policies
- EV3.1b Embrace and Promote Policies That Save Money in the Long Run Such as Complete Streets and Green Infrastructure Investments
- EV3.1c Ensure Tax and Fee Structures Are Aligned with Vision

Strategy EV3.2—Identify Opportunities to Cut Costs and Increase Efficiencies in Service Delivery

- EV3.2a Pursue Integrated Asset and Operation Management Solution
- EV3.2b Deploy New Technologies to Increase Efficiencies and Decrease Costs in Service Delivery
- EV3.2c Establish Inter-Agency and Inter-Government Partnerships When Feasible

Strategy EV3.3—Find New Financing and Funding Mechanisms

- EV3.3a Infrastructure Financing and Funding
- EV3.3b Crowd Funding/Crowd Granting
- EV3.3c Find Creative Ways to Fund Civic Innovation
- EV3.3d Retool Existing Financing Mechanisms to Increase Their Relevance in the 21st-Century Economy
- EV3.3e Create Incentives for Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses
- EV3.3f Establish Rapport with Foundations That Provide Funding for a Variety of Efforts

Strategy EV3.1—Adopt Fiscally Sustainable Growth Policies, Including Tax and Fee Structures That Are Aligned with the Overall Vision

Water, sewer, road, and other municipal infrastructure cost less in compact development than in more dispersed development. In addition, ongoing expenses—including those for police, fire, and emergency services; street maintenance; and trash removal—are lower per capita when development is compact.

The Town currently has 12 annexation or pre-annexation agreements that, if executed as approved under current regulations, can potentially accommodate a majority of the projected population growth for 2040 [See *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report and the Planning Framework Section*]. Many of these agreements promote low density, suburban style development patterns.

EV3.1a—Re-Evaluate Town Codes and Policies

- Several of the Town’s existing annexation agreements are set to expire within the next five to seven years. The Town should adopt a comprehensive annexation policy taking into account infill and redevelopment plans, projected population growth, and the long-term vision and goals established in this plan. (Q)
 - Any future annexation or pre-annexation agreements or extensions should be evaluated based on that new policy.
- Work with the Unit 5 school district to enact policies that prevent sprawl and encourage reinvestment in older schools supporting existing neighborhoods. (Q)
- Evaluate parking requirements comprehensively. [See *HS1.1e Rethink Parking*.]
- Consider utilizing Special Service Areas (SSA) to fund infrastructure improvements or services on the fringes that directly benefit certain neighborhoods and not the entire Town.
- Develop financial models to track and communicate return on public investments (ROI). (Q)
 - Example: St. Louis Development Corporation created a comprehensive, Excel-spreadsheet-based rate of return on incentive tool that not only takes into account the amount of taxes the development generates but also the substitution effect¹¹ and opportunity costs.¹² Such models provide a deeper understanding of the rate of return on public investments.

EV3.1b—Embrace and Promote Policies That Save Money in the Long Run Such as Complete Streets and Green Infrastructure Investments

EV3.1c—Ensure Tax and Fee Structures Are Aligned with the Vision

Water, storm water, sewer, solid waste, parks and recreation, and other fees account for approximately a quarter of the Town’s entire revenue stream, collectively making these fees the single largest revenue category. According to Finance Department staff, the Town assesses its charges for services on a five-year cycle. It makes every attempt to establish appropriate cost recovery targets for its fee structure. The Town currently subsidizes parks and recreation programming and solid waste services, but fully recovers all other services. In addition, the Town rewards best practices in storm water management through a crediting program, which allows a ratepayer to reduce their total storm water user fee if they take steps to reduce the impact of storm water runoff from their property.

- The vision and goals established in this plan continue to support the Town’s existing policies of subsidizing parks and recreation programming, which promotes equitable distribution of public goods, and incentivizing environmental sustainability through storm water credits. However, the Town should re-evaluate subsidies for services such as solid waste disposal that do not align with the long-term vision.



Strategy EV3.2—Identify Opportunities to Cut Costs and Increase Efficiencies in Service Delivery

EV3.2a—Pursue Integrated Asset and Operation Management Solutions

[See Strategy 1.1g in Infrastructure & Public Safety Element]

EV3.2b—Deploy New Technologies to Increase Efficiencies and Decrease Costs in Service Delivery

Smart City technology solutions in the areas of mobility, safety, energy, water, waste water, refuse and recycling, buildings, finance, and many more aspects of the government have great potential for cost savings. Public-private partnerships are critical to realize savings, particularly as these new technologies are changing at a breakneck pace.

In line with industry trends, the Water Department has begun deploying Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or Smart Meters. This technology allows staff to be more efficient by reading the meters remotely. Data gathered can be used to more efficiently identify leaks at customer sites and elsewhere, damaged or broken meters, and other issues. This technology has the potential to provide real-time usage data and enable residents to be more efficient.

The Town could explore other funding models to expedite the implementation of AMIs. A few funding options to explore include Energy Performance Contracting¹³ and grant opportunities through the Illinois Science and Energy Innovation Foundation and the Department of Energy.

EV3.2c—Establish Inter-Agency and Inter-Government Partnerships When Feasible

The Town is constantly engaged in inter-governmental cooperation with many entities—including the City of Bloomington, McLean County, ISU, Unit 5, and many regional groups and non-profit organizations—to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of services to its residents. Changes in technologies and the economic landscape are opening up additional opportunities. Ongoing discussions between the Town and City about important topics such as shared sales tax, a shared fire station to serve the northeast portion of the community, and a shared multi-sport complex have yet to bear fruit but clearly present significant opportunities for government efficiency.

Strategy EV3.3—Find New Financing and Funding Mechanisms

EV3.3a—Infrastructure Financing and Funding

[See Infrastructure & Public Safety Element]

EV3.3b—Crowd Funding/Crowd Granting

Give residents/local businesses an opportunity to fund projects they like through a variety of crowdfunding and crowdgranting platforms.

Crowdfunding and Crowdgranting Platforms

Patronicity (<https://www.patronicity.com>) brings together local citizens and sponsors to support initiatives in their communities. It is a civic crowdfunding platform that has helped launch the first state government partnership in the newly coined “crowdgranting” arena. Crowdgranting projects match community member support dollars for civic and social projects with matching grants from sponsoring partners. These crowdgrant opportunities are currently supported by Patronicity in the states of Michigan, Massachusetts, and Indiana. They are in communication with a few municipalities and Illinois state departments. Each crowdgranting project must be vetted by sponsoring partners before getting launched on the site. Patronicity provides personal support from the beginning to end, but collects a five percent built-in admin fee for funds raised.

Neighborly (<https://neighborly.com>) is self-described as the next generation of public finance. Neighborly offers a better way for people to invest directly in the places and projects they care about. By creating municipal bonds that are accessible and transparent, they have built a new approach through their technology platform to raising (is “forming” the right word?) capital dollars for civic projects. Neighborly is a registered broker-dealer that works with both individual and professional investors as well as with issuers that pride themselves on their civic engagement.

Citizeninvestor (<http://www.citizeninvestor.com>) is a crowdfunding and civic engagement platform for local government projects. This platform is open to any government entity or official project partner to initiate campaigns posted to their website to raise funds from individuals in the community. Individual community members can give tax-deductible donations to projects of their choice through Citizeninvestor and are not charged unless the project reaches full funding before the deadline. There is an eight percent fee for projects that are fully funded. However, this fee is added to the project cost and does not alter funds transferred. The functionality of this platform is very similar to Kickstarter and other crowdsourcing sites. Projects are searchable based on category and location.

IOBY (<https://www.ioby.org>) mobilizes neighbors who have good ideas to become powerful citizen leaders who plan, fund, and make a positive change in their neighborhoods. By offering a “crowd-resourcing” platform, IOBY connects leaders with funding and support to improve neighborhoods. The idea of “crowd-resourcing” provides everyone the ability to organize all kinds of capital—financial, social, in-kind, volunteer, advocacy—from within the neighborhood. IOBY provides support for getting projects ready to launch, helps manage and host the project donation page, and has various additional resources available. They charge a three percent fee for all projects as well as a flat platform fee of \$35 for projects above a \$1,000 threshold. For projects initiated without a non-profit partner, IOBY will act as a fiscal agent for an additional fee.

Farm and Food Related: A number of crowdfunding platforms are geared towards small farm-related businesses such as farm-to-table, food-based placemaking, restaurateurs and food hubs. These include:

- Barnraiser (<https://www.barnraiser.us>)
- CircleUP (<https://circleup.com>)
- Credibles (<https://credibles.org>)
- Equityeats (<https://www.equityeats.com>)
- Foodie Crowd Funding (<http://foodiecrowdfunding.com>)
- Food Start (www.foodstart.com)

EV3.3c—Find Creative Ways to Fund Civic Innovation

- Partner with private firms and philanthropies for technical assistance. Below are some examples.
 - **Code for America** builds open-source software for local governments and organizes people to address complex city challenges; its fellowship program sends technology teams to local governments for a year to partner with officials.
 - **Fuse Corps** is a nonprofit that partners with mayors and civic leaders to place mid-career professionals in cities for 12-month fellowships to help with innovation efforts.
 - **What Works Cities Initiative**, part of Bloomberg Philanthropies, provides technical assistance to cities to improve existing programs and processes using data and evidence-based models.
 - **Think tanks** such as Smart Growth America, Smart Cities Council, Urban Land Institute, and Lincoln Land Institute offer technical assistance on smarter developments.

EV3.3d—Retool Existing Financing Mechanisms to Increase Their Relevance in the 21st-Century Economy

- Bonds—there is an increasing interest among investors in options that earn decent returns and have socially desirable impacts. Normal should investigate:
 - Issuing Green Bonds to fund environmentally sustainable projects like Uptown 2.0
 - Pay for Success Bonds for social projects such as supportive housing
 - Qualified Public Infrastructure Bonds (QPIB) extend the benefits of municipal bonds to public-private partnerships
 - Utilizing newer avenues such as Neighborly.com to encourage local investment in local projects. Such investments also help build community pride and ownership.
- Gear traditional tools such as tax increment financing (TIF) districts, redevelopment agreements, enterprise zones, tax credits, and other traditional financing mechanisms towards placemaking and other place-based incentives that can result in higher property values compared to traditional developments. Distinctive places are also an important factor in attracting and retaining young professionals.
 - Continue the development of Uptown Normal as a vibrant, mixed-use district. Engage national developers committed to implementing smart growth projects. Example: Gorman and Company. www.gormanusa.com
 - Historic areas are an important component of distinctive placemaking. Utilize financial incentives such as federal and state tax credits for rehabilitation of historic properties, New Market Tax Credits, preservation easements, along with local incentive programs to promote historic preservation.
- Provide incentives to increase energy efficiency in commercial buildings or increase usage of clean energy sources. Such programs help reduce monthly business costs, particularly for small business owners. Sources of funding could include energy rebates, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing, Renewable Energy Credits, grants for clean energy, etc.
- Incentivize upgrades of office building stock that is aging in order to overhaul, or in some cases replace, obsolete buildings over time. Establish façade improvement grant opportunities.

EV3.3e—Create Incentives for Entrepreneurs and Small Businesses

- Create a microloan program, which provides small, short-term loans ranging from \$2,000 to \$50,000. Most microloans average about \$10,000. They play a critical role in starting, improving, or expanding small businesses. Cities run these programs in-house or partner with micro-lending agencies like Justine PETERSEN (www.justinepetersen.org).
- Partner with area anchor institutions to provide non-financial incentives such as mentorships, auditing, marketing, legal or other services.
- Help “gazelles” to scale up. Gazelles are second-stage entrepreneurs who are increasing their revenues by at least twenty percent annually. Gazelles are typically well positioned to scale-up and contribute significantly to local economies.
 - Kansas City, known for its robust entrepreneurship ecosystem, partnered with executive education based programs like ScaleUpU¹⁴ to help gazelles scale up.
 - As part of Bluegrass Economic Advancement Movement (BEAM), Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky, in partnership with JP Morgan Chase, created export readiness incentives to help their second-stage manufacturing entrepreneurs to export internationally.
- Work with local banking or other lending institutions to create a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), which is a financial institution dedicated to practicing affordable lending and financing community businesses, including small businesses and micro enterprises.
- Partner with organizations like National Main Street Center, Illinois Main Street Program, and others committed to promoting small businesses along Main Streets.
- Assist farmers, food processors, restaurateurs, and other small business within the local food sector to start, grow, and thrive in the community. The Town of Normal should build on its partnerships with the University of Illinois Extension office for technical assistance and funding in this area. Additional funding opportunities include:
 - The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides funding opportunities to communities who are looking to start a local food-hub. Examples include the Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program (B&I), Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, Farmers Market Promotion Program, Federal State Marketing Improvement Program, and Local Food Promotion Program.
 - American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) also provides money through their AARP Foundation Hunger Grant Program. This grant provides a private source of funding for communities looking to expand food access to a larger resident base and to low-income populations above 50. Partnerships with private organizations, like AARP, can provide unique opportunities to fund smaller projects.
 - Obtaining loans from large financial institutions is often a barrier for people looking to enter the food market. Alternative funding sources, such as RSF Social Finance,¹⁵ can help them obtain mortgage loans, construction loans, or equipment loans.
 - Farm Aid Grant Program¹⁶ offers grants to change the local food eco-system.
- Venture capitalists—Fortify the angel investment community in Bloomington-Normal.

EV3.3f—Establish Rapport with Foundations That Provide Funding for a Variety of Efforts

Examples include:

- **Kaufmann Foundation** offers a variety of grant opportunities to support entrepreneurial activity. While the majority of their funding is in and around the Kansas City area, they do provide funding for worthy projects throughout the United States.
- **Rockefeller Foundation** supports many innovative financing mechanisms that capitalize private sector investment for social and environmental good.
- **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** recognizes the connections between health and the built environment. Their grants focus on improvements to increase physical activity, improve access to local and fresh food, and other built environment improvements that have positive health outcomes.



Endnotes

1. Youreconomy.org
2. U.S. Patents and Trademarks Office, <http://patft.uspto.gov>
3. MEMobile Program, <http://www.memshop.org/memmobile.html>
4. Stevenson Center, <http://stevensoncenter.org>
5. The Center of Community Engagement and Service Learning, <http://communityengagement.illinoisstate.edu/students>
6. The SMACC Lab, <http://communication.illinoisstate.edu/tours/smacc.shtml>
7. The Innovation Consulting Community, <http://innovationconsulting.community>
8. PricewaterhouseCoopers Health Research Institute, Top health industry issues of 2017, December 2016.
9. Columbus Local Food Plan, <https://www.columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Local-Food-Action-Plan>
10. Smart Cities Council, <http://readinessguide.smartcitiescouncil.com>
11. Substitution Effect—taxes that would have been in the community regardless of this development. Example: A new restaurant might generate new sales tax but it takes away a portion of the business from a nearby restaurant.
12. Opportunity Cost—Factor associated with providing incentives in locations that are already attractive to private investment versus those incentives that encourage development in blighted areas.
13. See Health & Sustainability Element for explanation.
14. ScaleUpU is an accredited 36-month executive program that combines the best practices from successful entrepreneurial programs into one integrated solution. There are three components to the ScaleUpU initiative: On-Campus, On-site and On-line.
15. RSF Social Finance, <http://rsfsocialfinance.org>
16. Farm Aid Grant Program, <https://www.farmaid.org/our-work/grants>

A green-tinted photograph of a wind turbine in a cornfield. The turbine is in the background, and the foreground is filled with corn plants. The text "HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY" is overlaid in the center in white, bold, sans-serif font.

HEALTH & SUSTAINABILITY

“A ruined planet cannot sustain human lives in good health. A healthy planet and healthy people are two sides of the same coin.”

—Margaret Chan

Health & Sustainability CONTENT

E3.3 Introduction

E3.6 Goal HS1: Incorporate health into all policies.

E3.9 Strategy HS1.1—Commit to Smart Growth Principles for Existing and Future Urban Design

E3.14 Strategy HS1.2—Aim to Become a Vision Zero Community

E3.16 Strategy HS1.3—Ensure That Recreation Options in Normal Are Varied, Relevant, and Accessible in All Four Seasons

E3.17 Strategy HS1.4—Proactively Discuss and Address Issues Surrounding Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Mental Disability

E3.18 Strategy HS1.5—Provide Access to Healthy Food for All Members of the Community

E3.19 Strategy HS1.6—Utilize Health Impact Assessments to Inform Planning and Policy Decisions

E3.19 Strategy HS1.7—Pursue Blue Zones Certification

E3.20 Goal HS2: Be a regional leader in environmental stewardship.

E3.23 Strategy HS2.1—Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Improve Air Quality

E3.25 Strategy HS2.2—Reduce Community Solid Waste Generation and Increase Recycling and Reuse

E3.26 Strategy HS2.3—Ensure a Safe, Stable, Long-Term Regional Water Supply and Healthy Regional Watersheds

E3.28 Strategy HS2.4—Adopt and Encourage Green Infrastructure Practices throughout the Town

E3.30 Strategy HS2.5—Use the Success of Uptown Normal as a Model for Sustainable Development throughout the Town





Recognizing the ways in which the health of individuals and the natural environment are intertwined—and taking actions to improve both—has become one of the defining challenges not only for Normal, but for the entire global community.

What defines a healthy community? The physical health of its inhabitants is a good starting point. One of the driving forces behind early urban planning efforts in the United States was the need to address rampant and preventable illness in urban inhabitants, caused by overcrowding, industrial pollution, and poor sanitation. In the 21st century, we have, for the most part, addressed the worst of these issues.

But progress marches on, and healthy communities today must consider a wider variety of factors than our forebears did. Today, healthy communities recognize many components that determine good health, such as active transportation, cultural and recreational opportunities, decent and affordable housing, quality education, availability of public health programs and services, access to healthy food, and more [See Figure HS1].

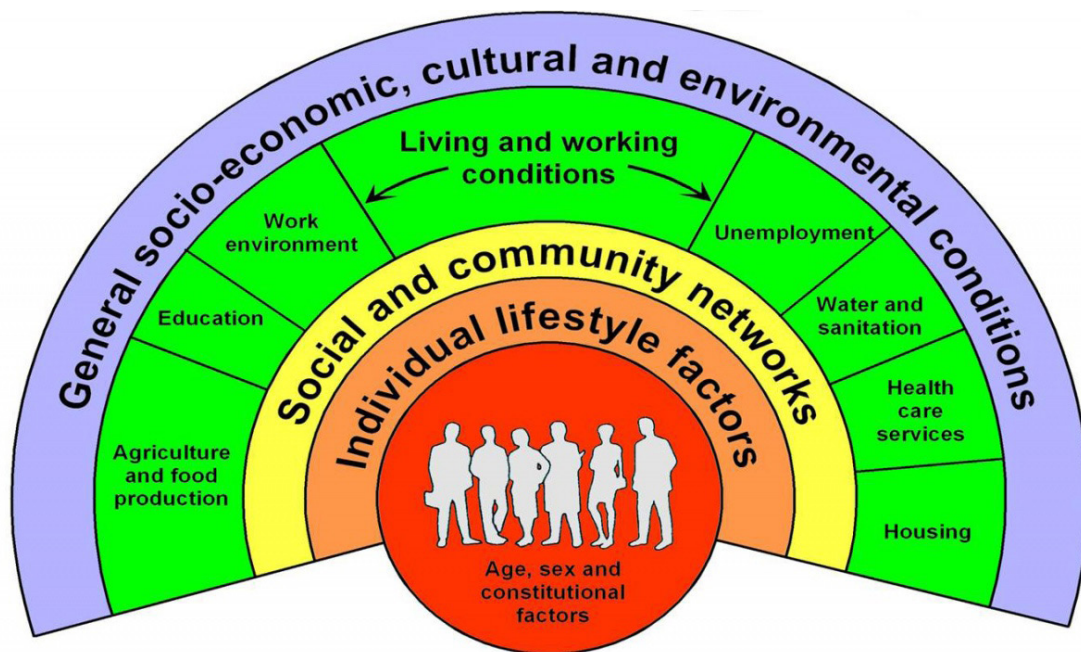


FIGURE HS1: Factors Influencing Health

Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991

This chapter focuses on the intersection between individual and environmental health, a decision driven by our evolving understanding of what a healthy community is. In addition to the considerations noted above, climate change and other human-generated environmental phenomena are reshaping our world, and we are learning that we must treat the health of our natural environment not as a separate concern, but as one inseparable from the health of our species.

This chapter cannot cover all of these issues comprehensively. For example, the 2017–2019 Community Health Improvement Plan, developed jointly by Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, the McLean County Health Department, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, and United Way McLean County, is the community’s primary health planning resource. However, the Town of Normal Comprehensive Plan touches on a number of elements of public policy that can have significant impacts on the health of our people and our environment. This chapter supplements existing health plans by proposing a number of measures the Town of Normal can take to support health in all its policies and be an effective regional leader in environmental stewardship. These measures are united by several underlying principles:

A commitment to smart growth and sustainable transportation: One of the pillars of smart growth is compact, infill development. This type of development has a number of benefits. First, it protects our natural resources by preventing further consumption of prime farmland and open space. It also leads to closer destinations and shorter trips, greater use of active transportation options and fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and sets the stage for further development of more sustainable transportation options. Sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, and transit networks are more heavily utilized as density increases, so smart growth not only increases the utility of current systems but incentivizes their further development.

The value of a vibrant local food system: Given the rich agricultural resources in McLean County, Normal has the potential to develop a local food ecosystem that serves as a significant economic resource while also providing environmental and health benefits. It can help reduce the associated environmental costs of importing food from other regions while being a key asset in reducing the high obesity rate in our region.

Responsible stewardship of our natural resources: Normal’s air, water, and land belong to everyone—not only those of us who live in Normal, but beyond. Being good stewards of these resources means:

- Taking steps to protect our surface water bodies and aquifers, and improving air quality by reducing vehicle use and emissions.
- Protecting and enhancing our remaining green and open spaces that have the potential to improve physical and mental health of the community while acting as showcases for environmental sustainability.
- Minimizing human impacts on the environment by reducing waste generation and increasing recycling rates.
- Promoting environmental sustainability in the built environment, both in the public and the private spheres.

Insisting on energy efficiency, water conservation, and green infrastructure in public projects has won the Town recognition for going above and beyond the call of duty. In the future, these should increasingly become the norm, with the Town's past efforts serving as a model for a sustainable future.

Fiscal sustainability: Most of the above actions are not only beneficial from the standpoint of Health & Sustainability; they are also fiscally responsible. For example, as described in the Planning Framework, compact infill development is less taxing on public resources than the sprawling growth and development patterns characteristic of the past several decades because it takes advantage of existing infrastructure rather than requiring new infrastructure to be built and maintained indefinitely. Similarly, green infrastructure is more fiscally efficient than traditional "gray" infrastructure for reducing stormwater volumes and improving stormwater quality; waste avoidance and recycling are more cost-effective than landfilling; healthy residents require less public spending on health services; and so forth.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a conceptual framework to inform better public policy. Recognizing the connections between all aspects of community health will make Normal better equipped to meet the challenges of the coming decades.

Connection to the Vision

Supporting Framework: Sustainability

Sustainability is the practice of evaluating all costs of our actions and taking the time to identify hidden costs affecting our local, regional, and global environment. Sustainability goes beyond dictating requirements for water, energy, and material use. We should be looking at beauty, healthful environments, and creating places that we love.

Core Value 8: Well-Being. Ours is an equitable health and wellness system, ensuring the healthy choice is the easy choice.

GOALS

Goal HS1: Incorporate health into all policies.

Goal HS2: Be a regional leader in environmental stewardship.

Goal HS1: Incorporate health into all policies.

Municipalities have considerable influence on many of the factors that impact health at both the individual and community levels. Specifically, they control the vast majority of land used for transportation as well as significant amounts of recreation and conservation land; provide public services such as water, sewer, refuse pick-up, emergency response, and many others; and review and approve new development and redevelopment proposals.

All of these systems greatly impact individual and community health. Through a “health in all policies” approach to operations and growth, the Town can utilize its transportation networks, public spaces, and urban design standards to help healthy choices become easy choices. This entails:

- Supporting healthy lifestyles by committing to smart growth principles for existing and future urban design. It can do this by exercising its influence in the realms of transportation, development review and approval processes, and housing policies.
- Reducing vehicular fatalities and injuries by taking steps to become a Vision Zero Community.
- Helping residents be healthier by providing and facilitating a diverse array of appealing, accessible, and all-season recreation options.
- Contributing to the broader regional effort to more effectively meet the mental and behavioral health needs of our citizens.
- Improve access to healthy food by supporting the growth of a local food ecosystem and removing distance and transportation barriers to healthy food.
- Using Health Impact Assessments to anticipate the impacts of new development on community health.
- Becoming a Blue Zone— A community that supports long and healthy lives.



Positive Contributors

- Complete Streets policy
- The Refuge Food Forest
- Constitution and Route 66 Trails
- Bike Share 309
- 50/50 Sidewalk Replacement program
- Uptown redevelopment efforts
- Good To Go Commuter Challenge
- Well-maintained parks, summer parks & rec programming
- Illinois Cottage Food Law

Challenges

- Auto-centric built environment
- Oversupplied parking
- Gaps in public park, recreation facility access as identified in the Town of Normal Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update
- Lack of a connected pedestrian and on-street bicycle network
- Euclidean zoning code that separates land uses
- Gaps in access to healthy food
- Insufficient cultural support for walking/biking as modes of transportation
- General lack of understanding about the impacts of community design on health
- Lack of sufficient outdoor activity opportunities during winter months
- Gaps in opportunities for individuals with special needs (autism spectrum, etc.)
- Affordable housing
- Ability to age in place

Indicators and Metrics

- Built environment
 - Population density per neighborhood (dwelling units per acre)
 - Fast food restaurants per 1,000 residents
 - Number of street trees or tree canopy over time
 - Percentage of dwelling units within 0.25, 0.5 miles of
 - Parks
 - Trails
 - Grocery stores
 - Pharmacies
 - Transit stops with at least 30-minute service
 - Percentage of dwelling units within 1 mile of
 - Elementary schools
 - Assigned elementary school
 - Acres of parkland per resident
- Personal safety
 - Transportation safety (crashes with serious injuries and fatalities)
 - Suicide rates
 - Violent crime rates
- Transportation system connectivity
 - Link-node ratio
 - Percentage of streets with sidewalks
 - Walk Score, Bike Score, and Transit Score

- Transportation system usage
 - Vehicle miles traveled per capita
 - Commute mode share (% auto, transit, bike, walk)
 - Percentage of Unit 5 students walking or biking to and from school
 - Average daily trail users at various points on the trail
- Other
 - Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) usage

Partners

- Activity & Recreation Center (Normal Township)
- Advocate BroMenn Medical Center
- Bike BloNo
- Community Health Care Clinic
- Connect Transit
- Friends of the Constitution Trail
- Illinois Department of Transportation
- Illinois State University
- Marcfirst
- Heartland Community College
- McLean County Government
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission
- McLean County Unit 5 School District
- McLean County Wellness Coalition
- OSF St. Joseph Medical Center
- UNITY Community Center
- Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)



Strategy HS1.1—Commit to Smart Growth Principles for Existing and Future Urban Design

- HS1.1a Promote Compact Infill Development
- HS1.1b Support Safe, Healthy, and Affordable Housing for All Residents
- HS1.1c Promote Programs That Encourage Walking and Bicycling
- HS1.1d Develop and Maintain a Robust Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure Network
- HS1.1e Rethink Parking

Strategy HS1.2—Become a Vision Zero Community

- HS1.2a Support the Creation of a Robust Database to Track the Region’s Transportation System Usage
- HS1.2b Implement Policy and Design Strategies That Prioritize Safety

Strategy HS1.3—Ensure That Recreation Options in Normal Are Varied, Relevant, and Accessible in All Four Seasons

Strategy HS1.4—Proactively Discuss and Address Issues Surrounding Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Mental Disability

- HS1.4a Design Public Spaces to Promote Mental Well-Being and Accommodate Mental Illnesses and Disabilities
- HS1.4b Promote Supportive Housing and Services That Locate Near Other Critical Amenities

Strategy HS1.5—Provide Access to Healthy Food for All Members of the Community

- HS1.5a Coordinate with Local Agencies, Organizations, and Businesses to Increase Food Access in Underserved Areas
- HS1.5b Support Local Food Systems and Healthy Food Options
- HS1.5c Support a Welcoming Regulatory Environment for Local Food Production
- HS1.5d Pursue a Grocery Store in Uptown Normal

Strategy HS1.6—Utilize Health Impact Assessments to Inform Planning and Policy Decisions

Strategy HS1.7—Pursue Blue Zones Certification

Strategy HS1.1—Commit to Smart Growth Principles for Existing and Future Urban Design

Smart Growth America, a national urban policy think-tank, established ten principles for creating more sustainable and livable cities. They focus on mixing land uses, creating a range of housing and transportation choices, encouraging compact development within existing communities, preserving open and green spaces, creating a sense of place through community and stakeholder collaboration in decision-making, and providing predictable development decisions that are fair and cost-effective.

HS1.1a—Promote Compact Infill Development

- Infill development is a guiding theme of this plan and can be found in almost every chapter; it is highlighted here as a health priority.
 - Infill development can shorten trips by bringing destinations closer together, thereby making active modes of transportation like walking and biking more practical. Compact walkable environments also create better transit environments because transit relies almost entirely on people being able to walk to a bus stop.
 - Infill efforts can be extremely beneficial to individuals with mobility challenges by providing closer access to critical amenities like grocery stores, pharmacies, and social activities.

HS1.1b—Support Safe, Healthy, and Affordable Housing for All Residents

- The physical conditions of homes, the neighborhood context in which homes exist, and the affordability of homes all have very significant health impacts on residents.

[See the Housing Element for more discussion]

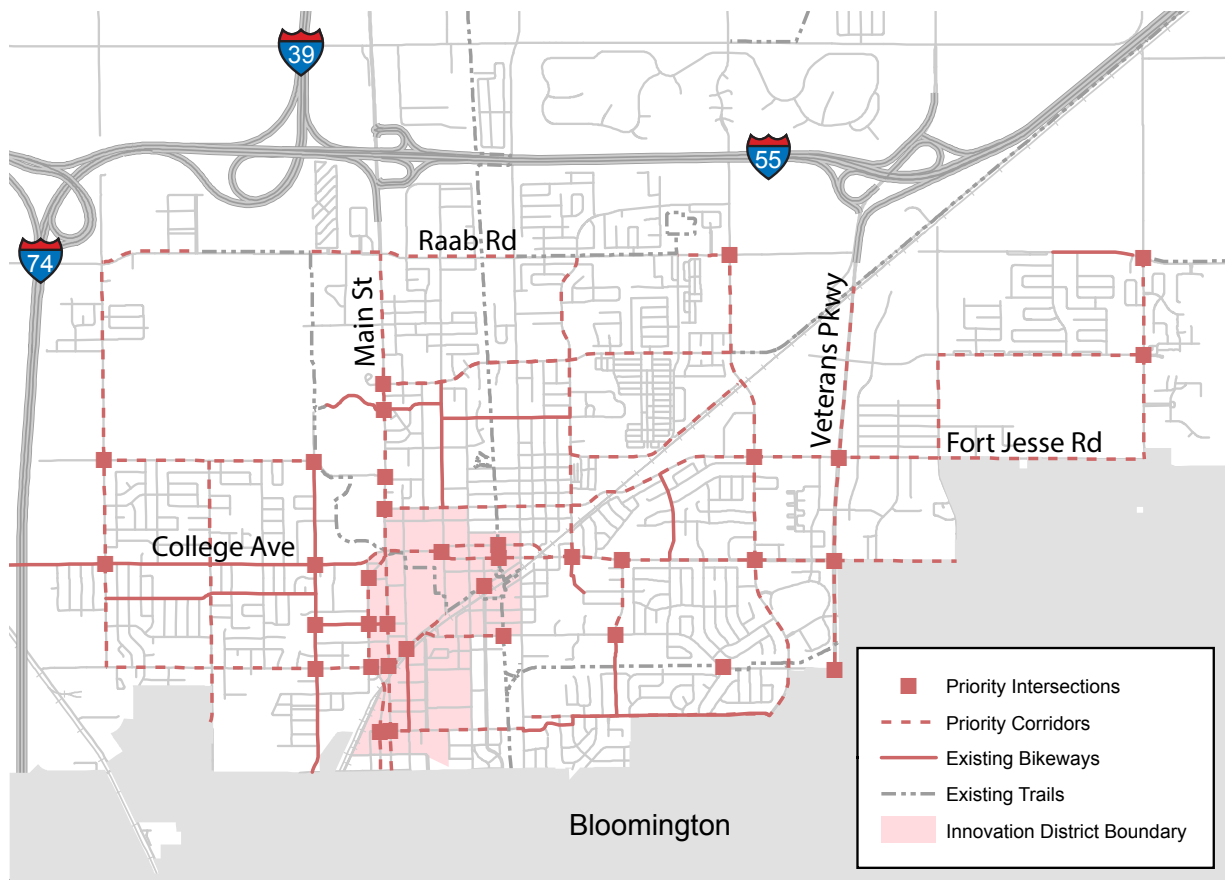
HS1.1c—Promote Programs that Encourage Walking and Bicycling

- Coordinate with the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) and McLean County Unit 5 School District to create a Safe Routes to Schools program. (Q)
- Monitor the success of the public bike share program and, where feasible, work with partners to expand it. (Q)
- Continue to promote and participate in sustainable transportation initiatives, such as the Good to Go Commuter Challenge. (Q)
- Work with MCRPC to develop a user safety educational program for a multimodal transportation system. (Q)
- Collaborate with local businesses and institutions to provide subsidized transit passes to employees.
- Partner with MCRPC and other institutions to pursue a regional rideshare or car share system for the community.

HS1.1d—Develop and Maintain a Robust Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Network

- Continue to implement the recommendations presented in *Main Street: A Call for Investment*, *Uptown Normal Master Plan Update*, *Town of Normal Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*, and *McLean County Regional Greenways Plan* when capital improvement projects are scheduled.
 - Map HS1 proposes high-priority corridors and intersections to prioritize for pedestrian and bicycle improvements based on the recommendations of the aforementioned plans as well as the vision set forth for this plan.

MAP HS1: Priority bicycle and pedestrian corridors, intersections, and zones.



These priorities were established based on: proximity to schools, parks, transit stops, trail connections, grocery stores, and pharmacies; recommendations contained in adopted plans like the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*, *Main Street: A Call for Investment plan*, and *Uptown Normal Master Plan Update*; Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) public survey comments; and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) crash records for corridors and intersections. Please note that this map does not replace but prioritizes the recommendations outlined in the aforementioned documents.



1: "Share The Road" sign on W Lincoln St; 2: Light The Night 2014; 3: A bike parking shelter in Uptown; 4: Constitution Trail; 5: Map of the Constitution Trail; 7: Bike Rodeo event in Uptown

- Consider updating the Town’s sidewalk design standards to require a wider minimum width and buffers between sidewalks and roadways.
 - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) best practices recommend five feet as a minimum sidewalk width and at least two feet for sidewalk buffers.
 - The existing network of sidewalks in Normal (including marked and unmarked crosswalks) has been inventoried as part of this plan. The Town should consider collecting data on width, condition, usage, and other attributes to help determine where sidewalks need maintenance or updating. (Q)
- Consider expanding the 50/50 Sidewalk Replacement Program funding level and incorporating methods to help low-income households utilize the program.
- Consider adopting a snow and ice removal ordinance for public sidewalks.¹ Utilize University Influenced Neighborhoods and Centers, where pedestrian traffic is heavy, to pilot this project.

Snow and Ice Removal Ordinance

The City of Urbana, IL utilizes its Sidewalk Snow Removal ordinance to ensure sidewalks are safe and passable for pedestrians to travel on. Within 24 hours of a winter storm, all property owners are required to clear snow and ice from any public sidewalks adjacent to their property. In the case of non-compliance, City staff or contractors will clear the sidewalks and property owners will be fined to cover the City’s expenses. *[See City of Urbana’s website for more information.]*

HS1.1e—Rethink Parking

A considerable (and growing) body of literature is shedding light on the many negative consequences that municipalities are facing as a result of too much parking prescribed by their zoning codes. Consequences include fragmented downtowns and other centers, induced demand for automobile use, sedentary lifestyles, reduced housing options, higher monthly rental rates for commercial and residential tenants, and a significant opportunity cost on property taxes.

- Consider reducing and/or eliminating minimum parking requirements.
 - Minimum parking requirements have been shown to force developers to set aside space for parking that would have otherwise been used for additional residential or commercial space.
 - Parking expenses include the costs of land, construction, and maintenance. Those expenses are passed along to tenants in the form of higher rents.
 - Eliminating the minimum requirement would not result in developers underbuilding on parking; instead, they would build just enough to ensure a property’s success.



Removing Parking Minimums

Many communities across the nation have revisited their minimum parking requirements. Green pins signify parking minimums completely eliminated in at least one area of the city, blue pins signify parking minimums lowered or removed for certain uses, and orange pins signify cities currently discussing their parking minimum laws. Source: Strong Towns.

Donald Shoup (www.shoupdog.com), a distinguished research professor of urban planning at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), conducted extensive research on the effects of parking requirements. He points out that most minimum parking requirements are not based on data or evidence and categorizes them as arbitrary. He estimates that parking adds upwards of sixty percent to total project costs depending on the city and the type of parking. He argues that removing minimum parking requirements could result in compact growth, mixed use, and more affordable developments.

- Use technology to increase parking efficiency. Examples include multi-space metering on streets and vehicle counting systems in parking decks.
- Conditionally allow adjacent land uses to share parking facilities at reduced requirements, provided the land uses are complementary.
- Utilize the proposed Innovation District and neighborhood commercial areas as civic innovation labs to pilot the suggested actions for parking. (Q)
- Evaluate the effectiveness of on-street parking as a tool to calm traffic where feasible.
- Identify areas where underused on-street parking impedes the installation of on-street bike infrastructure.

Strategy HS1.2—Aim to Become a Vision Zero Community

Originating in Sweden in 1997, Vision Zero is a traffic safety project that has spread throughout Europe and North America. Its purpose is to achieve a transportation system with zero fatalities or serious injuries. More than any other, life and health are the most important features of a transportation system; thus, responsibility for safety is on both the individual user and the system as a whole. Through a Vision Zero lens, traffic crashes and deaths are not “accidents.” They are preventable incidents that would be less likely to occur through proper policy and design decisions.

As a policy and an approach to transportation planning, Vision Zero must be present at all levels of governance. Currently, the draft 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) outlines Vision Zero as a key approach to transportation safety. The Town should collaborate with MCRPC, the local MPO, to implement it in Normal.

HS1.2a—Support the Creation of a Robust Database to Track the Region’s Transportation System Usage

The Census Bureau has estimates for commute mode share, and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) maintains crash records and vehicle statistics like Average Annual Daily Traffic, but data regarding walking and biking trips are almost non-existent. The Town should continue to collaborate with MCRPC, City of Bloomington, Connect Transit, McLean County, and others to address these gaps in data.

Examples of information to include in a regional transportation database:

- For walking and biking trips—the number of non-commute trips, location of popular destinations and popular routes, and trip time-of-day.
- For auto trips—the extent of ridesharing, ride-hailing, and car-sharing service in Normal, percentage of trips via single-occupancy vehicle, parking supply vs. parking demand throughout the day, and extent of freight transportation in Normal.
- Transit use (Connect Transit and Amtrak) and airport use (Central Illinois Regional Airport).

HS1.2b—Implement Policy and Design Strategies That Prioritize Safety

Consider implementing the following policies in the Innovation District and University Influence Zone (UIZ), where non-vehicular traffic is highest.

- Reduce the speed limit. A growing number of municipalities are lowering speed limits to 20 mph on residential streets and 25 mph on other streets that aren't major roadways.
- Adopt a No Right Turn on Red policy.
- Explore opportunities for incorporating traffic calming elements such as narrower vehicle lanes, curb extensions at intersections, traffic circles, curbside trees/vegetation, raised bicycle/pedestrian crossings, and public art.



Public art and curbside planters act as traffic calming elements at this intersection.

Source: Flickr user annethlibrarian



Curb extensions and landscaping act as traffic calming elements at this intersection.

Source: Flickr user drdul

- Where possible, incorporate barriers between on-street bicycle space and vehicle space. FHWA and NACTO best practices recommend that barriers be at least two feet wide.
- In areas where no bike lanes exist and travel lanes are too narrow for bicycles and vehicles to operate side by side, “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” signage should be used instead of “Share the Road” signage.



The “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” sign found in FHWA’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Educational programs like CarFit cater to seniors who still wish to drive. CarFit is a program sponsored by AAA, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), and the American Occupational Therapy Association. It seeks to help older drivers maintain safe driving skills and keep their vehicle tuned to their personal needs.

Strategy HS1.3—Ensure That Recreation Options in Normal Are Varied, Relevant, and Accessible in All Four Seasons

In 2015, the Town updated its *Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan* to ensure that the Town provides parks and programming that are varied, relevant, and accessible in all four seasons. The parks plan update outlines a series of policy recommendations, infrastructure design upgrades, and programming targets for the Parks and Recreation Department as well as several major needs for Normal. Land use planning can support the goals of the updated parks plan, particularly by enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access to parks.

- Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements near parks [See Map HS1].
- Utilize temporary solutions such as pop-up parks and play streets as alternative recreational spaces in under-served areas.



The Crowdus Park, a pop-up park in Dallas, Texas that took over one block of Crowdus Street for four days.

Source: Flickr user steevithak



A Play Street in Seattle, Washington. The street was temporarily closed off to vehicle traffic to allow activities in the street.

Source: Flickr user sdot_photos

Strategy HS1.4—Proactively Discuss and Address Issues Surrounding Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Mental Disability

Mental health, mental illness, and mental disability are issues that are slowly gaining the attention they need. Land use planning can play a support role in meeting the needs of people with these special needs.

In 2015, the McLean County Board adopted a *Mental Health Action Plan* that outlines five focus areas for improvement: Collaboration and Coordination, Access to Medical Services and Medical Management, Juvenile Services, Housing, and Crisis Services. In 2016, the McLean County Health Department partnered with OSF St. Joseph Medical Center, Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, and United Way of McLean County to complete the first joint *Community Health Needs Assessment*. Behavioral Health (including Mental Health and Substance Abuse) was identified as one of three health priorities for the community. The Assessment's counterpart, the *2017–2019 Community Health Improvement Plan*, outlines two major goals to address the Behavioral Health priority: increase coping skills in order to reduce suicide, self-inflicted injury, and alcohol abuse; and reduce the stigma surrounding behavioral health in order to promote earlier access to care.

HS1.4a—Design Public Places to Promote Mental Well-Being and Accommodate Mental Illnesses and Disabilities

- Promote access to green, active, social, and safe spaces as a way to reduce depression, anxiety, stress, and other mental illnesses.
- Consider multisensory design elements in parks and green spaces that appeal to individuals of all abilities. (Q)
 - Example: Natural playgrounds have been shown to facilitate the development of social and motor skills, boost creativity and problem-solving skills, increase attention span, and build stronger sensory memories and connections to nature. They do not equate to simple fields of grass, rather they are playgrounds that pull design inspiration from nature. Common components include hills with climbing walls, wood structures, tree forts, boulders, and a variety of plants. Some even have water features.

HS1.4b—Promote Supportive Housing and Services That Locate Near Other Critical Amenities

- Walkable infill housing near amenities like grocery stores, pharmacies, and support services can facilitate personal independence.
- Multi-unit housing gives residents opportunities for social interactions and relationship-building in safe and comfortable settings.
- Housing with supportive services should range in the type and level of care provided.

[See *Housing Element* for additional information.]

Strategy HS1.5—Provide Access to Healthy Food for All Members of the Community

Communities have traditionally taken a passive approach to food access. For many decades the industry has favored large-format grocery stores clustered along auto-oriented thoroughfares such as Veterans Parkway. Not all residents can access these stores physically or financially; instead, they turn to convenience stores and fast-food restaurants where healthy options are minimal. Through proactive strategies the Town has a role to play in improving access to healthy food for all residents.

HS1.5a—Coordinate with Local Agencies, Organizations, and Businesses to Increase Food Access in Underserved Areas

- Explore opportunities for mobile grocery stores or other alternatives, in places where attracting brick and mortar grocery stores proves to be challenging.

HS1.5b—Support Local Food Systems and Healthy Food Options

- Identify and minimize regulatory barriers that businesses and institutions face in selling and sourcing locally grown or produced food. *[See the Economic Vitality Element for more information on a local food system plan.]* (Q)
- Take an active role in supporting pollinators through continued participation in programs such as the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. (Q)
- Increase availability of healthy food and beverage choices in public venues, locally sourced when possible.
- Consider expanding community gardens within the Town's park network. (Q)
- Where feasible, plant edible landscapes in public parks and along the Constitution Trail.

HS1.5c—Support a Welcoming Regulatory Environment for Local Food Production

- Clarify zoning code provisions as they pertain to permitted locations for residential gardening, hoop houses, and rooftop gardens. (Q)
- Revisit urban agriculture regulations.

HS1.5d—Pursue a Grocery Store in Uptown Normal

Both the original Uptown Master Plan and the Uptown 2.0 Plan cite a grocery store as a critical need in Uptown Normal. While an Uptown grocery would serve an economic development purpose, it would also address the Uptown's status as a "food desert" as determined by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Food deserts are defined as census tracts that contain at least 500 people or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population who live more than one mile from a supermarket or full-service grocery store.

Strategy HS1.6—Utilize Health Impact Assessments to Inform Planning and Policy Decisions

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is a proactive tool for informing plan, project, or policy decisions regarding their impacts on public health. HIA's coordinate decision-makers, elected officials, planners, public health officials, and community members to create a holistic analysis and encourage public participation and education.

Intergovernmental Review

Currently, MCRPC coordinates an intergovernmental and interagency consistency review process for development proposals in the Bloomington-Normal community. McLean County Health Department, MCRPC, and the McLean County Wellness Coalition should explore strategies for incorporating HIA's into this process.

Strategy HS1.7—Pursue Blue Zones Certification

“Blue Zones” are the handful of communities in the world where people live disproportionately long and healthy lives. The common features of these communities include active environments in which walking and active lifestyles are facilitated by community design, simple and healthy diets, and social interaction. Planning principles can be applied in Normal to reach Blue Zone outcomes. An applicant for Blue Zone certification must bring residents, businesses, restaurants, grocery stores, community groups, and public agencies together in a commitment to healthier decision-making throughout the community. The Town should consider applying for a Blue Zone certification.



Goal HS2: Be a regional leader in environmental stewardship.

The health of our natural environment is dependent on the individual and collective actions of our municipalities, institutions, and residents from across all our area communities. The Town has a history of working closely with City of Bloomington, McLean County, public and private institutions, and the residents of the entire region to ensure clean water, clean energy, and safe natural environments.

The Town reiterated its commitment to environmental sustainability during the Uptown redevelopment process. Uptown was one of the first places in the nation to receive a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) designation. Uptown Circle received a national award for smart growth from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) in 2012. In 2016, the Town raised the bar again for environmental sustainability when it registered Uptown South as a Living Communities Challenge project, which aims to create restorative developments that give back to the environment.

The Town should keep pushing the envelope by increasing its efforts beyond Uptown and being a leader in broader regional efforts.

Much of the work needed to reach this goal was established in the Town's Sustainability Plan, adopted in 2011. As outlined in the *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report*, a good deal of progress has already been made. Going forward, the Town should continue to support energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality; reduce solid waste generation and increase recycling; protect and conserve regional water resources; adopt and encourage green infrastructure practices; and promote sustainable development practices that build on the successes of Uptown Normal.



Courtesy Ecology Action Center

Positive Contributors

- Existing/underway plans and studies
 - Community-Wide Sustainability Plan and 2035 Report
 - Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Bloomington-Normal Community Energy Strategic Plan (BNCESP), Facilities and Energy Management Plan
 - Solid waste Planning: Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (ISWMP)
 - East Central Illinois Water Supply Plan, City of Bloomington Interim Water Supply Plan (potentially relevant to Normal's long-term water supply situation)
 - Regional Greenways Plan, Town of Normal Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Existing programs, policies, and practices that promote sustainability
 - Public garbage and single-stream recycling services
 - Stormwater utility fee
 - Uptown Normal plans
 - Sustainable projects and initiatives such as EVTown, Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge
 - Mahomet Aquifer Advocacy Alliance
 - Rebates for energy efficiency upgrades: Ameren, Corn Belt, and Nicor Gas all provide energy efficiency rebates for both residential and commercial users.
 - Net metering

Challenges

- Climate change
- Lack of funding capacity (local, state, and federal)
- Lack of local control due to federal or state preemption

Partners

- Bloomington and Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD)
- Connect Transit
- Greenways Advisory Committee
- Mahomet Aquifer Consortium (MAC)
- McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
- Watershed Management Oversight Committee
- State of Illinois agencies; e.g., Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Unit 5
- Higher educational institutions
- Audubon Society (local John Wesley Powell chapter)
- Bike BloNo
- Ecology Action Center (EAC)
- Friends of the Constitution Trail
- Friends of Everbloom
- Illinois Prairie Community Foundation (IPCF)
- ParkLands Foundation
- Prairielands Preservation Foundation
- Ride Illinois
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- National developers focused on smart growth. Example LSTAR VENTURES, <https://www.lvnt.com>

Indicators and Metrics

- Community-wide energy use and fossil fuel emissions [*See the Health & Sustainability Appendix for more information.*]
- Community recycling rate [*See the Health & Sustainability Appendix for more information.*]
- Community water consumption
- Water quality
 - Nitrate, phosphorous, and chloride concentrations; Total Suspended Solids
 - Aquatic habitat ratings as determined by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), professional environmental consultants, environmental groups, academic researchers, etc.
- Air quality
 - Concentrations of air pollutants regulated by the federal government under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) (particularly ground-level ozone and particulate matter)
 - Greenhouse gas emissions
- Green space and ecological protection
 - Amount of land designated as Conservation Zones
 - Street trees (number of trees, area of tree canopy, diversity of species)
 - Amount of chemicals applied to Town property
- Development standards and metrics
 - Green building certifications
 - Green neighborhood certifications
 - Runoff volume reduced through green infrastructure
 - Minimum or maximum parking requirements (or lack thereof)

Strategy HS2.1—Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Improve Air Quality

- HS2.1a Implement the Recommendations of the Bloomington-Normal Community Energy Strategic Plan
- HS2.1b Investigate and Minimize the Impact of the Town’s Vehicle Use on Local Air Pollution
- HS2.1c Work with the Town’s Institutional Partners—Connect Transit, ISU, Heartland, Non-Profits, and Businesses—to Encourage Them to Adopt More Sustainable Fleet Management Practices

Strategy HS2.2—Reduce Community Solid Waste Generation and Increase Recycling and Reuse

- HS2.2a Implement the Recommendations of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan
[See Health & Sustainability Appendix]

Strategy HS2.3—Ensure a Safe, Stable, Long-Term Regional Water Supply and Healthy Regional Watersheds

- HS2.3a Continue to Engage with Other Communities in the Mahomet Aquifer Region to Ensure a Safe and Stable Long-Term Water Supply
- HS2.3b Incentivize and Promote Water Conservation Measures in Public and Private Facilities
- HS2.3c Monitor, Protect, and Restore Town Waterways and Watersheds, and Support Broader Regional Watershed Protection

Strategy HS2.4—Adopt and Encourage Green Infrastructure Practices throughout the Town

- HS2.4a Identify Opportunities for Green Infrastructure Projects throughout Normal
- HS2.4b Strive to Make a Net Positive Impact on the Natural Environment through Normal’s Park System

Strategy HS2.5—Use the Success of Uptown Normal as a Model for Sustainable Development throughout the Town

- HS2.5a Reduce Energy Usage in Town Facilities
- HS2.5b Set High Green Building Standards for New Municipal Buildings and Major Upgrades of Existing Municipal Buildings, Including Outside the Uptown Area
- HS2.5c Work with Anchor Institutions (ISU, Advocate BroMenn) to Use the Innovation District as a Showcase for Sustainability Efforts
- HS2.5d Use Integrated Technology Systems and Robust Data Collection and Analysis to Achieve More Sustainable Outcomes
- HS2.5e Expand Neighborhood-Level Sustainability Efforts
- HS2.5f Support Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Development with Appropriate Regulatory Tools

Strategy HS2.1—Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Improve Air Quality

The most important long-term goal of reducing greenhouse gas concentrations is to slow and eventually reverse global climate change, an effort that will take many years to produce a significant impact.

A more immediate benefit will be to reduce the prevalence of chemical compounds that more directly affect human health. Fossil-fuel-burning vehicles, industrial facilities, certain agricultural operations, and other sources of greenhouse gases add to local concentrations of ground-level ozone, fine particulate matter, and other air pollutants that cause and exacerbate respiratory diseases. Promoting more compact development patterns, facilitating a shift to a less auto-centric transportation system, and working with partners with more direct influence on agricultural practices to reduce their impact on regional air pollution will all reduce local contributions to climate change and lead to cleaner air.

Addressing air quality now will also help keep Normal within the ever-tightening federal air quality standards. If the Town were to fall into “nonattainment status,” indicating that air quality had fallen below federal standards, a new set of federal regulations would kick in and impact the Town’s future growth and redevelopment plans.

The primary way Normal can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality is by reducing vehicle emissions, the leading generator of ground-level ozone and particulate matter pollution across the country. Compact land development and sustainable modes of transportation—both of which will reduce vehicle usage by making it easier to get around without a car—are therefore critical to improving regional air quality.

Greenhouse gases (GHG) can also be reduced by decreasing energy consumption in homes, businesses, and public facilities.

HS2.1a—Implement the Recommendations of the Bloomington-Normal Community Energy Strategic Plan (BCESP)

The Bloomington-Normal Greenhouse Gas Inventory, performed by the Ecology Action Center (EAC) [See Ecology Action Center call out box] in 2014, quantified and categorized GHG emissions in Bloomington-Normal using 2008 data. The inventory determined that in 2008 roughly 78% of GHG emissions were attributable to stationary energy usage (buildings), including electricity generation and heating/cooling; 20% to vehicular transportation; and 3% to landfilled waste, wastewater treatment, and rail transportation combined.

Based on the 2014 inventory, the Town of Normal (in cooperation with the City of Bloomington) has commissioned the EAC to complete a second inventory and subsequent Energy Strategic Plan. That plan will provide specific recommendations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, both by reducing energy consumption and reducing the use of fossil fuels in particular.

HS2.1b—Investigate and Minimize the Impact of the Town’s Vehicle Use on Local Air Pollution

Since the adoption of the Sustainability Plan, the Town has worked to support greater adoption of electric vehicles throughout Bloomington-Normal (part of the “EVTown” initiative). As part of these efforts, Normal has installed 48 Level 2 charging stations and one Level 3 “Quick Charge” station at various locations around Bloomington-Normal, while Tesla has installed four Supercharger stations.² The Town has also integrated six electric cars into its fleet. The Town can further lead by example by more significantly reducing the impact of its own vehicle usage on regional air quality:

- Assess the Town’s current fleet in terms of mileage, fuel efficiency, and emissions.
- Engage in more sustainable fleet management practices.
 - Phase out vehicles and fuel types that have particularly harmful effects; phase in more efficient vehicles with fewer greenhouse gas and criteria air pollutant emissions.
 - Use technology to monitor vehicle usage and identify ways to reduce emissions.

Case study: The New York City Clean Fleet plan (2015) analyzes the various ways New York City can reduce GHG, nitrogen oxide, and particulate emissions from fleet vehicles, in order to improve air quality and help reach the city’s ambitious target of an 80% reduction of GHG emissions by 2050.

HS2.1c—Work with the Town’s Institutional Partners—Connect Transit, ISU, Heartland, Nonprofits, and Businesses—to Encourage Them to Adopt More Sustainable Fleet Management Practices

Ecology Action Center

According to its mission statement, “The Ecology Action Center (EAC) is a not-for-profit environmental agency with a mission to inspire and assist residents of McLean County in creating, strengthening, and preserving a healthy local environment.” The EAC’s broad purview includes education, advocacy, planning, and technical services in the realms of solid waste and recycling, clean energy, water conservation, stormwater management, and more. It sponsors residential electronics and computer recycling, household hazardous waste events, water monitoring and testing, distribution of rain barrels, instruction on rain garden construction and workshops on recycling, renewable energy programs, eco-responsible lawn care, and clean water initiatives.

As a not-for-profit, the EAC relies on the financial support and backing of local organizations, grantors, and business partners to provide programs and environmentally responsible resources. The EAC also operates under several intergovernmental agreements through which it provides vital services for local governments. It is a member of and works in concert with local environmental committees, including the Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake Watershed Management Oversight Committee and the McLean County Greenways Advisory Committee.

The EAC also partners with Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, the McLean County Health Department, and Home Sweet Home Ministries, among others. Statewide partnerships include the Illinois Recycle Association, the Illinois Green Business association, the Illinois Environmental Council, and Faith in Place.



Strategy HS2.2—Reduce Community Solid Waste Generation and Increase Recycling and Reuse

HS2.2a—Implement the Recommendations of the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan

Solid waste management is coordinated at the regional level by the Ecology Action Center (EAC) through the McLean County Solid Waste Program. The Solid Waste Program is funded through the McLean County Solid Waste Fund, which is maintained by contributions from the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, and McLean County under an intergovernmental agreement. Through this program, the EAC provides “education and outreach, solid waste planning through the Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (ISWMP), administration of nontraditional recycling programs, coordination of household hazardous waste collection, and technical services such as annual calculation of community wide waste generation and recycling rates.”¹

The *Plan* recognizes the need for prompt attention to the issues identified in the new ISWMP. Those include:

- The impending closure of McLean County Landfill #2, which is expected to reach full capacity in early 2018.
- A stagnating community-wide recycling rate. The 2012 ISWMP set a goal to recycle 40% of all solid waste generated in McLean County. After years of steady increases [see *Table: McLean County Recycling Rate, 2007-2015*], the rate appears to have plateaued a few percentage points short of that target.

TABLE HSI: McLean County Recycling Rate, 2007-2015³

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total MSW Recycled (tons)	93,065	98,220	80,217	80,541	71,099	66,737	73,833	85,196	91,866
Total MSW Landfilled (tons)	164,101	163,202	148,089	134,325	136,927	116,290	121,991	141,068	159,989
Total MSW Generated (tons)	257,166	261,422	228,306	214,866	208,026	183,027	195,824	226,264	251,855
Percent Change from Previous Year	9.3%	1.7%	-12.7%	-5.9%	-3.2%	-12.0%	7.0%	15.5%	11.3%
Recycling Rate	36.2%	37.6%	35.1%	37.5%	34.2%	36.5%	37.7%	37.7%	36.5%
Percent Change from Previous Year	12.1%	3.8%	-6.5%	6.7%	-8.8%	6.7%	3.4%	-0.1%	-3.1%

- Increased demand for more recycling options, including:
 - Commercial recycling;
 - Construction and demolition recycling;
 - Multifamily housing recycling;
 - Composting of food waste;
 - Electronics recycling
- A permanent collection facility for household hazardous waste (HHW). The EAC presently collects HHW every other year at a one-day event. A permanent facility would allow for community to capture a greater portion of HHW and serve as a significant regional asset.
- A need for increased outreach and technical assistance.

Strategy HS2.3—Ensure a Safe and Stable Long-Term Regional Water Supply and Healthy Regional Watersheds

HS2.3a—Continue to Engage with Other Communities in the Mahomet Aquifer Region to Ensure a Safe and Stable Long-Term Water Supply

Normal is fortunate to have access to the Mahomet Aquifer, which appears likely to remain a safe and plentiful water source for the foreseeable future. However, Normal shares the aquifer with other communities across 15 counties in East-Central Illinois, and the apparent dependability of the aquifer does not preclude the need for coordination and planning.

The Town must maintain its status as a strong regional partner in protecting the Aquifer. Part of this task will include supporting further scientific research and ongoing monitoring.

To those ends, Normal should maintain its presence in the Mahomet Aquifer Advocacy Alliance (MAAA), a coalition of local governments and stakeholders that has existed since 2011, when it came together to successfully oppose the disposal of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in the Clinton Landfill. The MAAA also successfully lobbied the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to designate the Mahomet Aquifer as a “Sole Source” aquifer, which requires federally funded projects, landfills, and landfill expansion projects above the Aquifer to meet stronger federal and state standards. The Town should also coordinate with the City of Bloomington, which is a member of the Mahomet Aquifer Consortium—a separate group that focuses more on research than advocacy—to stay abreast of any relevant information from that group.

With regard to planning, the Town’s Sustainability Plan and 2035 Report identified a need for more coordinated water supply planning and proposed strategies to achieve that goal. Among the Sustainability Plan’s recommendations was to implement “A Plan to Improve the Planning and Management of Water Supplies in East-Central Illinois”, a 2009 report by the Regional Water Supply Planning Committee (RWSPC) for East Central Illinois (a planning committee commissioned by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as an organ of the MAC). Both the Sustainability Plan and the regional water supply plan remain relevant today.

Water Supply Issues in Bloomington-Normal

Normal and Bloomington have different sources of potable water. Normal draws its water from 15 wells in the Mahomet Aquifer, while Bloomington relies on two manmade surface reservoirs: Lake Bloomington and Evergreen Lake. These reservoirs derive their water from Money Creek and its tributaries (in the case of Lake Bloomington) and Six Mile Creek and its tributaries (in the case of Evergreen Lake). Land use within these two watersheds is primarily agricultural, though both overlap slightly with northeastern Normal and are therefore to some degree impacted by land use in Normal.

There is no present indication that Normal’s withdrawal rate from the aquifer is in any danger of exceeding the aquifer’s recharge rate. Water quality, likewise, is not an issue at present. Bloomington, however, has for decades experienced water quality issues in its reservoirs, due primarily to agricultural land use within the lakes’ watersheds. Bloomington has commissioned various studies over the years to determine alternative sources of water, including the Mahomet Aquifer in western McLean County. If Bloomington is ever forced to tap into the Mahomet Aquifer, the City’s water supply issues may become very relevant to Normal.

HS2.3b—Incentivize and Promote Water Conservation Measures in Public and Private Facilities

The Sustainability Plan includes a number of recommendations on water conservation. The Town should evaluate progress and pursue unattained objectives within that plan. In addition the Town should:

- Expand the use of smart meters to help users be more efficient and contribute to a Town-wide “Smart City” network. (Q)
- Incentivize the use of rainwater harvesting systems in public and private buildings. Consider the use of graywater recycling systems in public facilities, to the extent permitted by state regulations.
- Increase education and outreach efforts to encourage water conservation in both the public and private sectors.

HS2.3c—Monitor, Protect, and Restore Town Waterways and Watersheds, and Support Broader Regional Watershed Protection

Normal’s top priority surface watershed is Sugar Creek. Though McLean County residents do not consume water from Sugar Creek, it flows through much of Bloomington-Normal and southwestern McLean County before merging with Salt Creek in an adjoining county. Salt Creek in turn finds its way to the Sangamon River, which flows into the Illinois River, which flows into the Mississippi, which empties into the Gulf of Mexico. Sugar Creek also serves a limited recreational purpose and has potential to grow in that regard over time if water quality and habitat issues are addressed and a planned trail along the creek is built.

[See Planning Framework - Natural Corridors section for specific recommendations.]

Greenways Advisory Committee

What are greenways?

Greenways are narrow bands of open space that provide habitats for wildlife and essential routes for species migration; filter pollutants from water; enhance scenic and aesthetic qualities; and in many instances expand recreational as well as social, cultural, and economic opportunities. Greenways can run along natural corridors such as streams or manmade corridors such as roads and old rail lines.

McLean County Greenways Plan

The 2009 *McLean County Greenways Plan* presents a vision for greenways and provides a framework for the establishment of a regional system of interconnected greenways throughout McLean County. It identifies local greenways resources including streams, watersheds, forested areas, parks, and other open spaces that can be developed or utilized for recreational purposes or conservation. It also suggests goals, objectives, and strategies for maintaining and developing open spaces in the future for recreation or conservation as well as suggesting methods and responsibilities for local greenway implementation. It identifies high-priority greenways along with strategies for acquisition, implementation, and regulation of greenways.

Greenways Advisory Committee

The Greenways Advisory Committee is an umbrella organization for local government staff, local agencies, and individuals with interests in the development of a regional greenway system. The Town of Normal is currently playing an active role on the Committee and should continue to do so. Ongoing and near-future initiatives include: walking and biking trails, watershed planning and protection, education and advocacy, and coordination with Bloomington and Normal Water Reclamation District on wastewater and stormwater management.

Strategy HS2.4—Adopt and Encourage Green Infrastructure Practices throughout the Town

“Green infrastructure” is a combination of “living ecologies functioning cooperatively with technology to optimize the performance of an entire system to balance water, carbon cycling, energy, and nutrients.”⁴ Green infrastructure complements and, in some cases, replaces “gray infrastructure”—the more traditional manmade structures such as pipes, pumps, and treatment facilities.

The benefits of green infrastructure are numerous and interconnected, and include the following:

- Less up-front investment than traditional gray infrastructure;
- Reduced stormwater runoff volumes and rates, thus reducing water pollution and easing the burden on stormwater infrastructure;
- Improved water quality and ground water recharge through infiltration;
- Provision of wildlife and pollinator habitat areas;
- Enhanced attractiveness of the built environment;
- Improved air quality;
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions

Selected Green Infrastructure Practices

The US EPA identifies several common green infrastructure measures and defines them as follows:¹

Bioswales are vegetated, mulched, or xeriscaped channels that provide treatment and retention as they move stormwater from one place to another. Vegetated swales slow, infiltrate, and filter stormwater flows. As linear features, vegetated swales are particularly suitable along streets and parking lots.

Downspout Disconnection refers to the rerouting of rooftop drainage pipes to drain rainwater to rain barrels, cisterns, or permeable areas instead of the storm sewer.

Green Parking: Many green infrastructure elements can be seamlessly integrated into parking lot designs. Permeable pavements can be installed in sections of a lot, and rain gardens and bioswales can be included in medians and along the parking lot perimeter. Benefits include mitigating the urban heat island effect and a more walkable built environment.

Green Roofs are covered with growing media and vegetation that enable rainfall infiltration and evapotranspiration of stored water.

Green Streets and Alleys integrate green infrastructure elements into the street and/or alley design to store, infiltrate, and evapotranspire stormwater.

Land Conservation: Protecting open spaces and sensitive natural areas within and adjacent to cities can mitigate the water quality and flooding impacts of urban stormwater while providing recreational opportunities for city residents.

Permeable Pavements are paved surfaces that infiltrate, treat, and/or store rainwater where it falls. Permeable pavements may be constructed from pervious concrete, porous asphalt, permeable interlocking pavers, and several other materials.

Planter Boxes are urban rain gardens (see below) with vertical walls and either open or closed bottoms. They collect and absorb runoff from sidewalks, parking lots, and streets and are ideal for space-limited sites in dense urban areas and as a streetscaping element.

Rain Gardens are shallow, vegetated basins that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, and streets. Rain gardens mimic natural hydrology by infiltrating and evapotranspiring runoff.

Rainwater Harvesting Systems collect and store rainfall for later use. When designed appropriately, rainwater harvesting systems slow and reduce runoff and provide a source of water.

Urban Tree Canopy: Trees reduce and slow stormwater by intercepting precipitation in their leaves and branches. Many cities have set tree canopy goals to restore some of the benefits of trees that were lost when the areas were developed.

HS2.4a—Identify Opportunities for Green Infrastructure Projects throughout Normal

Across the Town of Normal, there are underutilized spaces that could, in individually small but collectively significant ways, provide a net positive impact with regard to sustainability, public education with respect to environmental issues, aesthetics, and recreation. *[See Planning Framework - Natural Corridors section for specific recommendations.]*

HS2.4b—Strive to Make a Net Positive Impact on the Natural Environment through Normal’s Park System

Normal’s parks offer some of the highest visibility and largest-scale opportunities for initiatives relating to environmental sustainability.

[See Planning Framework - Natural Corridors section for specific recommendations]



Strategy HS2.5—Use the Success of Uptown Normal as a Model for Sustainable Development throughout the Town

The original Uptown redevelopment achieved LEED ND Silver Certification. The Uptown Normal Master Plan Update (a.k.a. Uptown 2.0) is aiming for LEED ND Platinum, a more stringent certification level. Uptown 2.0 was also one of the first projects in the world to be registered with the Living Communities Challenge (LCC), a highly robust program aimed at not only avoiding harm to the environment, but having a net-positive impact [see Figure HS2: “How LCC Petal Certification Works”].

FIGURE HS2: How Petal Certification Works



Having established Uptown Normal as a model of sustainability, the next, and more challenging, step is to do the same for the rest of the Town.

HS2.5a—Reduce Energy Usage in Town Facilities

- Implement the recommendations of the Facilities and Energy Management Master Plan (2014). Identify similar best practices for facilities not covered by that plan.

HS2.5b—Set High Green Building Standards for New Municipal Buildings and Major Upgrades of Existing Municipal Buildings

HS2.5c—Work with Anchor Institutions (ISU, Advocate BroMenn) to Use the Innovation District as a Showcase for Sustainability Efforts

[See the Economic Vitality Element for more on the Innovation District]

- Work with the Illinois State University (ISU) Office of Sustainability to make the Innovation District a civic innovation lab for green infrastructure and green technology.
- Encourage new developments and redevelopments in the Innovation District to meet strong green building standards.
- Support green technology startups within the district’s boundaries.

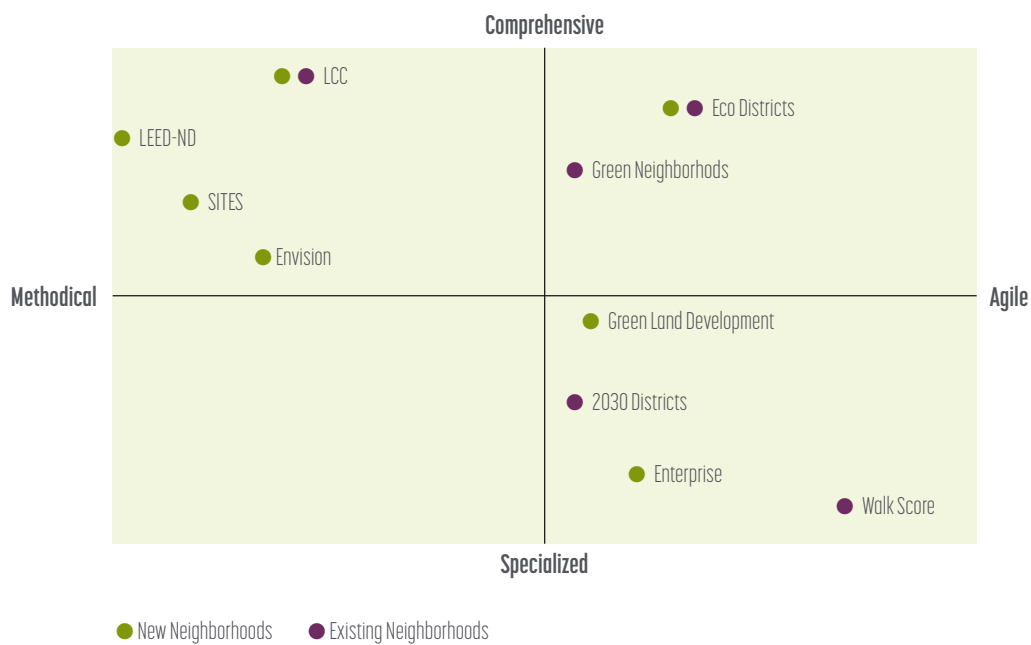
HS2.5d—Use Integrated Technology Systems and Robust Data Collection and Analysis to Achieve More Sustainable Outcomes

- Per Strategy 2.3 in the Economic Vitality Element, build “Smart Urban Systems” to help the Town achieve sustainability goals. Smart Urban Systems include building-scale as well as community-wide energy, transportation, water, wastewater, and solid waste systems that use sensors and software to increase decision-makers’ and the public’s access to real-time information and provide services more efficiently and sustainably.
- Conduct an assessment of the existing urban tree canopy to identify gaps in the canopy. New software such as iTree,⁴ a free tool set from the USDA Forest Service, provides urban and rural forestry analysis and benefits assessment tools.
- Implement smart light fixtures to reduce the environmental impact of lighting and provide a network of digital infrastructure hubs. Well-designed street lights can minimize environmental impact and serve as digital infrastructure hubs. The International Dark Sky Association, Smart Cities Council, and a number of other entities have produced free resources that help find the best balance.

HS2.5f—Expand Neighborhood-Level Sustainability Efforts

- Build closer relationships with neighborhood organizations to develop neighborhood-level action plans and establish implementation and maintenance programs with clearly-established standards. Utilize a certification program such as LEED ND or one of several similar standards to guide these efforts and quantify success [See Figure HS3].⁵
- Partner with environmental groups, organizations that support neighborhood-level community development (e.g., NeighborWorks or Center for Neighborhood Technology), and area businesses to share the costs of planning, certification, implementation, and maintenance.

FIGURE HS3: Neighborhood Rating Tools Map



HS2.5g—Support Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Development with Appropriate Regulatory Tools

Selected Implementation and Funding Strategies

- Adopt a **“Fix It First” approach to transportation planning**. This means prioritizing fixing and improving existing right-of-way to increase connectivity over building new roads, designing the system to be multimodal for people and freight, etc.
- **Impact Fees** are a way to generate revenue for specific public services that are impacted by additional development.
- State, Federal, and non-governmental **grants** such as Surface Transportation Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, Transportation Enhancements program, Safe Routes to School Program, New Freedom Initiative, and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).
- **Align existing fees to incentivize sustainable practices**. For example, solid waste collection is currently not paid for entirely by the garbage fee collected from residents. It is partially subsidized through the General Fund. Rather than subsidizing all solid waste collection, the Town should consider incentivizing recycling by removing the fee for recycling carts, which could be a barrier to participation in the curbside recycling program for some households. Consider implementing a “pay-as-you-throw” (PAYT) garbage fee structure, accounting for concerns about illegal dumping and trash compacting (the latter in volume-based systems).
- **Energy Performance Contracting (EPC)** for public buildings. In EPC clients work with an Energy Service Company (ESCO) to identify energy-saving improvements. The ESCO then pays the upfront cost of making the improvements, and the client pays the ESCO back over time out of the resulting energy savings. See <https://energy.gov/eere/slsc/energy-savings-performance-contracting>, among other sources, for more information on this subject.
- **Revolving loan funds (RLFs)**. An RLF is a self-sustaining method of financing capital investments. Making sustainable infrastructure upgrades that pay for themselves over time—often through reduced energy costs—is a common use for RLFs. After an initial capitalization, green projects are paid for up front using loans from the RLF. A portion of the savings from these projects is then reinvested into the RLF; in this way, one project pays for another.
- **Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)**. RECs are tradable certificates representing one megawatt-hour (MWh) of renewable energy generation. Producers of renewable energy can sell the credits on a market to both public and private customers, either directly or through third parties. RECs allow purchasers to support renewable energy beyond their capacity to generate it themselves. The Town of Normal uses RECs to offset the non-renewable energy purchased through its municipal electric aggregation program, through which it purchases electricity for the whole community.
- **Property-assessed Clean Energy (PACE)**. In a PACE program, the entity administering the program pays the upfront costs of energy-saving improvements to private property, which the property owners pay back over time through property assessments. Commercial PACE programs are more common than residential and avoid certain regulatory issues faced by residential programs (U.S. Department of Energy).⁶
- **Community Solar**. Community solar, also known as “shared solar,” is a solar power facility that provides energy to multiple users. Legislation in Illinois, passed in 2016, provides support for community solar projects, including in low-income neighborhoods.⁷
- **Green Bonds**. Green bonds are bonds issued for the purpose of financing environmentally sustainable development projects. They are issued by governments, environmental groups, and even some for-profit companies.⁸

TABLE HS2: Green Infrastructure Funding and Financing Mechanisms

Funding Source	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Taxes/ General Funds	<i>Funds raised through taxes such as property, income, and sales that are paid into a general fund.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consistent from year-to-year ■ Utilizes an existing funding system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Competition for funds; ■ Tax-exempt properties do not contribute ■ System is not equitable (does not fully reflect contribution of stormwater runoff)
Fees	<p><i>Funds raised through charges for services such as inspections and permits.</i></p> <p><i>Funds raised through developer impact fees are one-time charges linked with new development.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific permit and inspection fees allow for more direct allocation of costs for services provided. ■ Addresses potential stormwater impacts related to new construction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funding not available for larger projects or system-wide improvements ■ Developer impact fees may be an unreliable source when development slows (due to market downturns/contractions) ■ Requires administrative framework to assess and manage
Stormwater Utility	<i>A stormwater utility generates its revenues through user fees and the revenue from the stormwater charges will go into a separate fund that might be used only for stormwater services.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dedicated funding source ■ Directly related to stormwater impacts ■ Sustainable, stable revenue ■ Shared cost ■ Improved watershed stewardship ■ Addresses existing stormwater issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Feasibility study required for implementation, fee structure, and administration of utility ■ Approval by vote of the local legislative body ■ Perception of the public of a “tax on rain”
Grants	<i>State and federal grants provide additional funding for water quality improvements.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing sources available for stormwater-related funding ■ Does not require repayment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Competitive ■ Typically one-time, project-specific, or time-constrained funds ■ Often requires a funding match
Bonds	<i>Bonds are not a true revenue source, but a means of borrowing money. “Green” bonds are a new source of funding dedicated to environmentally friendly projects, including clean water projects.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing sources available for stormwater-related funding ■ Can support construction-ready projects ■ Can provide steady funding stream over the period of the bond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One-time sources of funds ■ Requires individual approval for each issuance ■ Requires full repayment ■ Possible interest charges ■ Requires dedicated repayment revenue stream ■ May require design-level documents to be prepared in advance ■ Likely requires voter approval ■ Can have high transaction costs relative to requested amount ■ May require significant administrative preparation to issue
Loans	<i>Low-interest loans may be secured, but are generally used for planning and capital projects.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Existing sources available for stormwater-related funding ■ Offers low- or no-interest financing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ One-time source of funds ■ Requires full repayment
Public-Private Partnerships	<i>Contractual agreement between a public agency and a private sector entity that allows for the private sector participation in the financing, planning, design, construction, and maintenance of stormwater facilities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Can reduce costs for government ■ Significantly leverages public funding and government resources ■ Ensures adequate, dedicated funding ■ Improved O + M ■ Shared risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Perceived loss of public control ■ Assumption that private financing is more expensive and belief that contract negotiations are difficult

Source: USEPA, 2014. “Getting to Green: Paying for Green Infrastructure: Financing Options and Resources for Local Decision-Makers.”

Endnotes

1. Champaign, Illinois sidewalk snow removal ordinance in the University District: <http://champaignil.gov/public-works/find-a-service/streets-sidewalks-3/snow-ice-removal>
2. Information from the NC Clean Energy Technology Center's Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (DSIRE). Illinois listings are at <http://programs.dsireusa.org/system/program?fromSir=0&state=IL>
3. https://www.arl.noaa.gov/Forecast_Ozone_PM.php
4. Ecology Action Center, <https://ecologyactioncenter.org>
5. Patchett, Jim, Raj Rajaram, and Ron Doetsch. "Gray or Green: The Role of Watershed-Scale Infrastructure Systems for Waste Water Treatment." November 10, 2016. Presentation given to the Greenways Advisory Committee.
6. Uptown Normal Master Plan Update (2015), p. 72.
7. i-Tree, <http://www.itreetools.org>
8. Eliot Allen, 2014. "How Green is My Neighborhood? Let Me Count the Ways." Planetizen. <https://www.planetizen.com/node/69022>





INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC SAFETY

“America’s infrastructure scores a D+. . . . Failure to act on the deteriorating infrastructure has a cascading impact on our nation’s economy, impacting business productivity, gross domestic product (GDP), employment, personal income and global economic competitiveness.”

—2017 Infrastructure Report Card Published by American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)

Infrastructure CONTENTS

E4.3 Introduction

E4.6 Goal IP1: Provide reliable local infrastructure in the most efficient and equitable manner to promote compact and contiguous development.

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Infrastructure forms the bones, circulation, and neural pathways of our community, the literal foundation of our quality of place.

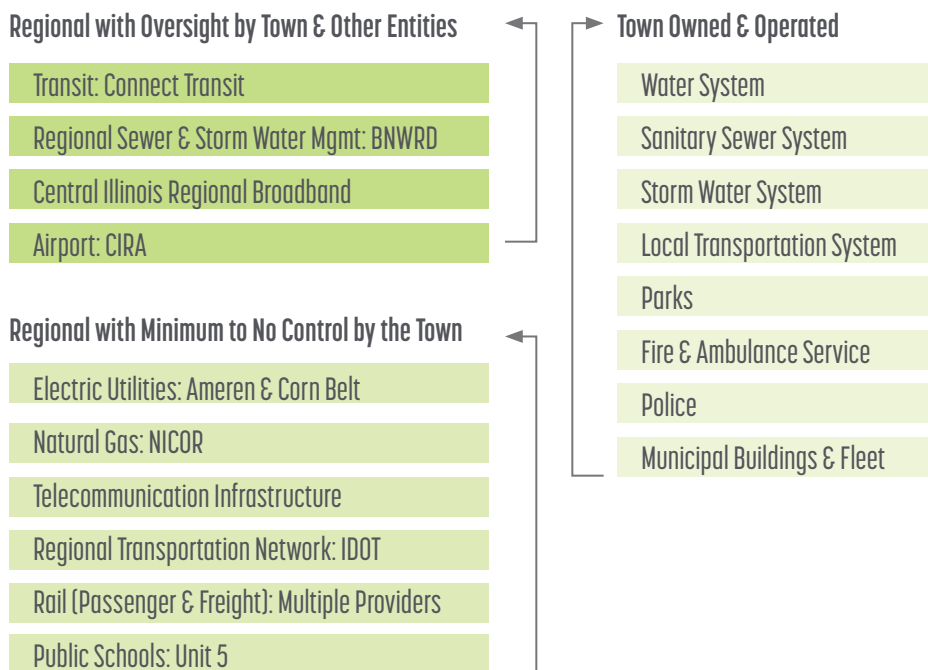
Timely and adequate infrastructure investment should be one of the top priorities of any community. In practice, however, such investment cannot always be taken for granted. In many places around the United States, a combination of economic, administrative, and political challenges have led to the infrastructure being systematically under-maintained.

The Town of Normal has largely kept ahead of the national curve in keeping its infrastructure in good condition. However, the Town faces many of the same difficulties as other communities, including rising costs, decreasing physical space for infrastructure in all three dimensions, large ongoing maintenance commitments resulting from decades of sprawl, and the disruptive effects of new technologies. The Town must be prepared to meet these challenges by maintaining and developing systems at a high standard, giving special attention to connectivity between these systems and the agencies that manage them, and anticipating changes on multiple fronts.

New technologies and their application to infrastructure elements and systems are a key factor in planning the future of these major civic structures. The technologies expected to appear in the near future are more data-driven and transparent, and they promise to make the operation of municipal infrastructure more efficient. But the breakneck pace of this change is not without its challenges. The Town must be prepared to act quickly to adopt new standards as needed to support emerging infrastructure technologies. As technologies change and emerge, it becomes more difficult to estimate costs over time. As public demand for new services and capabilities increases—for example, the expectation of free Wi-Fi access in public spaces—the need for creative and flexible approaches to funding will also increase.

These challenges heighten the need for a fiscally and environmentally sustainable approach to infrastructure investment. Compact, contiguous growth will allow the Town to focus on maintaining its existing infrastructure in good condition and avoid the need for new, expensive systems, while placing less stress on prime farmland and natural resources.

FIGURE IP1: Infrastructure in Normal is owned and operated by a complex web of public and private entities



Executing this strategy will require significant ongoing planning and investment by the Town itself and coordination with other infrastructure operators and institutional users. Infrastructure in Normal is owned and operated by a complex web of public and private entities [See Figure IP 1]. This chapter focuses primarily on Town-owned and -operated systems, where policymakers and staff have more direct control over outcomes. In its role as a regional partner and collaborator, the Town should be guided by the same overall principles of smart growth, sustainability, and responsiveness to change that animate the rest of this document.

It is important to note that while this chapter is more technical and concrete in its approach than other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, it shares those elements' basic DNA. The overall thrust of this plan is toward a more *complete, connected, and compact* Town of Normal that more fully embraces smart growth principles. The strategies and actions of the Infrastructure chapter are consistent with that vision.

A second important note is that most of the infrastructure systems discussed in this chapter have already been the subjects of more technically focused master planning processes that dealt with each of those systems exclusively. The purpose of this chapter is not to develop detailed plans for these systems, but to establish big-picture strategies for these systems that are in sync with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Connection to the Vision

Supporting Framework: Technology

Core Value 2: Economy. Ours is an innovative and diverse economy in 2040 that has grown from what it was in 2016.

Core Value 3: Spaces. Ours is an inter-related community visible through safe and accessible spaces that people love.

Core Value 8: Well-being. Ours is an equitable health and wellness system, ensuring the healthy choice is the easy choice.

GOALS

Goal IP1: Provide reliable local infrastructure in the most efficient and equitable manner to promote compact and contiguous development.



Goal IP1: Provide reliable local infrastructure in the most efficient and equitable manner to promote compact and contiguous development.

In recent years, the Town has shifted toward emphasizing compact development that takes advantage of existing infrastructure. This has served as the basis for a variety of policies. For example, the new Fire Strategic Plan—including new station locations and response time calculations—was developed under the assumption that Normal will not grow significantly outward beyond its current boundaries. The preference for maintenance over unchecked expansion is also well-supported by public opinion both during the outreach processes for both the Comprehensive Plan as well as the BN Mobile- Long Range Transportation Plan.

While maintenance should be the primary emphasis, there will inevitably be a need to expand certain infrastructure systems as the Town evolves. As technology continues to reshape how the economy and the public sector work, a robust technology infrastructure will become as much of a determinant of economic growth as roads and sewers. As this new infrastructure is put in place, it will be necessary to find space for it in public rights-of-way, which are growing crowded in all three dimensions.

Fiscal considerations will complicate the picture somewhat. Deferred investment, while not as big a problem in Normal as elsewhere, is still taking a toll, limiting flexibility and the ability to think ahead. One significant challenge will be developing funding and financing strategies for a more sustainable era—in particular, resolving inherent conflicts between sustainability goals and how infrastructure is currently funded. Water infrastructure, for example, is maintained through user fees. If the Town succeeds in promoting water conservation, there will be less revenue available to maintain the system. Likewise, maintenance of streets and roads are primarily funded through the motor fuel tax, which will become a less reliable source of revenue if (as hoped) alternative modes of transportation gain wider use.

Positive Contributors

- Town's commitment to smart growth principles
- Existing inter-governmental and regional partnerships
- Infrastructure generally maintained in good condition
- Capital Investment Planning
- Mapping of assets in geographic information system (GIS)

Challenges

- Aging infrastructure
- Sprawling development patterns
- Dwindling revenue sources for capital investment

Indicators and Metrics

- Corporate area in square miles
- Population density
- Linear miles of streets, trails, on-street bicycle facilities
- Ratio of streets to sidewalks
- Linear miles of complete streets
- Number of households within 4-, 5- and 6-minute fire response zone
- Linear miles of water distribution, sanitary sewer and storm sewer
- Acres of parks per 1,000 population
- Number of LEED certified community facilities

Partners

- [See Figure IP 1.]
- City of Bloomington
- McLean County

Strategy IP1.1—Ensure that Infrastructure Systems Support Current and Future Growth in a Fiscally, Socially, and Environmentally Responsible Way

- IP1.1a Continue to Implement and Update Master Plans for Local Infrastructure Systems
- IP1.1b Protect Existing Infrastructure Investments over Funding New
- IP1.1c Structure Rates and Fees to Recover All Costs, Including Construction, Operation, and Maintenance
- IP1.1d Embrace Density in Land Development Practices to Accommodate More Intense Development Along Existing Corridors of Infrastructure
- IP1.1e Ensure that the Town's Public Rights-of-Way Provide a Multi-Purpose, Connected Physical Space for Movement and Travel, Public and Private Utilities, and Other Appropriate Public Purposes
- IP1.1f Reduce the Environmental Footprint of the Town's Infrastructure
- IP1.1g Pursue Integrated Asset and Operation Management Solutions
- IP1.1h Continue to Develop Regional and Inter-Jurisdictional Relationships for Effective Delivery of Services
- IP1.1i Continue to Work Cooperatively to Support Utilities and Other Partners Providing Regional Infrastructure
- IP1.1j Continually Educate and Engage Residents, Particularly the Development Community, on Infrastructure-Related Issues and the Need for Compact Development

Strategy IP1.2—Ensure Availability of Reliable and Adequate Water Supply and Delivery Systems to Provide Safe and High-Quality Potable Water at Adequate Pressures

- IP1.2a Continue to Be an Active Partner in Regional Water-Supply Planning and Protection Efforts
- IP1.2b Continue to Monitor and Maintain Existing Water Distribution Systems to Ensure Good Condition
- IP1.2c Explore Alternative Rate Structures that Protect Revenue Streams While Promoting Water Conservation Efforts
- IP1.2d Evaluate the Merits and Demerits, Efficient Routes, and Expansion Alternatives for Long-Term Capital Investment Projects
- IP1.2e Utilize Appropriate Technologies to Increase Efficiencies



Strategy IP1.3—Provide Reliable and Efficient Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Collection Systems to Protect the Public Health, Safety, and the Natural Environment

- IP1.3a Fund the Implementation of the New Sanitary Sewer Master Plan
- IP1.3b Work with BNWRD to Identify and Mitigate I/I Issues in the Sanitary Sewer System
- IP1.3d Develop a Town-wide Stormwater Master Plan
- IP1.3e Continue to Require that All New Developments Provide Appropriate Storm Water Detention Facilities to Protect Water Quality
- IP1.3f Continue to Monitor and Mitigate Urban Stream Bank Erosion
- IP1.3g Utilize Green Infrastructure Solutions for Infrastructure Management, Where Feasible
- IP1.3h Encourage Low Impact Development
- IP1.3i Continue to Explore Opportunities to Establish a Regional Stormwater Detention Basin in the Area Bound by Shelbourne Avenue to the West, Veterans Parkway to the East, the Railroad to the South, and the Interstate to the North

Strategy IP1.4—Maintain a Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Transportation Network to Serve All Users

- IP1.4a Continue to Work with MCRPC and Other Partners to Address Transportation Issues at a Regional Level
- IP1.4b Provide Data and Support to MCRPC for Increased Utility of the Transportation Model, Transportation Dashboard, and Other Data-Driven Initiatives
- IP1.4c Advance the Objectives of the Forthcoming LRTP (BN Mobile)

Strategy IP1.5—Build Quality Technology Infrastructure

- IP1.5a Ensure Availability of Quality Broadband Infrastructure to All the Activity Centers for Their Long-Term Vibrancy
- IP1.5b Provide Free, Reliable, and Secure Wi-Fi in Parks and Public Places
- IP1.5c Partner with Connect Transit to Provide Free Wi-Fi Near Transit Stops



Strategy IP1.6—Provide Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Services to Protect the Lives, Health, Safety, and Livelihoods of Residents and Businesses

IP1.6a Ensure that Land Development Policies Support NFD's Goal of Responding to 90% of Calls Within a 6-Minute Response Time

Strategy IP1.7—Ensure that Normal's Community Facilities Continue to Serve the Town's Needs as It Grows and Develops

IP1.7a Ensure the Provision of Community Facilities in a Manner Consistent with the Vision and Goals of this Plan

IP1.7b Enhance Inter-Governmental and Regional Coordination in Locating and Sharing Community Facilities

IP1.7c Continue to Locate and Build Public Facilities in a Manner that Raises the Bar for Architectural Distinction, Placemaking and Energy Efficiency

IP1.7d Create a Comprehensive Strategic Plan for All Community Facilities Owned and Operated by the Town

Strategy IP1.1—Ensure that Infrastructure Systems Support Current and Future Growth in a Fiscally, Socially, and Environmentally Responsible Way

IP1.1a—Continue to Implement and Update Master Plans for Local Infrastructure Systems

Several local systems—such as parks, sewer, community facilities, and bicycle and pedestrian systems—currently have individual master plans. These plans provide strategic direction for the growth and maintenance of individual systems. It is important to fund their implementation adequately and update them periodically.

IP1.1b—Protect Existing Infrastructure Investments over Funding New

- Focus on upkeep and maintenance of existing infrastructure systems.
- Expand infrastructure, as needed, when such improvements result in overall efficiency within the system.
- Develop infrastructure assessments and establish acceptable levels of service for each local infrastructure system to guide their maintenance, upgrades, and expansion.

IP1.1c—Structure Rates and Fees to Recover All Costs, Including Construction, Operation, and Maintenance

Conduct periodic rate studies and adjust prices accordingly to ensure the long-term fiscal sustainability of each system. Consider social equity issues in those rate and fee structures.

IP1.1d—Embrace Density in Land Development Practices to Accommodate More Intense Development Along Existing Corridors of Infrastructure

- Prioritize new development projects in areas that are currently served by existing infrastructure or can be extended efficiently and economically. Consider infrastructure managed by other utilities/entities in the area, such as transit, while reviewing development proposals.
- Implement cost-sharing or up-sizing assistance programs for infill and redevelopment projects.

IP1.1e—Ensure that the Town’s Public Rights-of-Way Provide a Multi-Purpose, Connected Physical Space for Movement and Travel, Public and Private Utilities, and Other Appropriate Public Purposes

IP1.1f—Reduce the Environmental Footprint of the Town’s Infrastructure

- Consider energy efficiency, alternative energies, and reduction of maintenance costs when expanding, remodeling, or building new systems.
- Incorporate green infrastructure solutions that can improve the Town’s aesthetics while serving important functions such as providing clean air and water, improving storm drainage, and potentially improving habitat for wildlife and recreational space.
- Include life cycle costs that take long-term maintenance and repair into account for future infrastructure repairs and replacement decisions.

IP1.1g—Pursue Integrated Asset and Operation Management Solutions

Municipal assets are property owned, controlled or managed by the Town for delivery of its services. These include water, wastewater, stormwater, fire hydrants, streets/sidewalks, trails, parks, community facilities, vehicle fleet, and much more.

Integrated Asset Management is a comprehensive process of:

1. Inventorying current assets and their condition in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
2. Establishing an appropriate and sustained level of service for each asset
3. Identifying assets critical to sustained performance
4. Identifying each asset's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and Operations and Management (O&M) strategies
5. Identification of best long-term financing strategy

The Town currently has aspects of the aforementioned process in place and is positioned well to migrate towards integrated asset and operations management. US EPA offers free tools and resources for municipal asset management.¹

IP1.1h—Continue to Develop Regional and Inter-Jurisdictional Relationships for Effective Delivery of Services

Costs shared are costs reduced. The Town should continue to collaborate with the City of Bloomington, McLean County, Unit 5 school district, and other taxing bodies to effectively deliver services.

IP1.1i—Continue to Work Cooperatively to Support Utilities and Other Partners Providing Regional Infrastructure

- Enhance coordination among Town departments and regional electric, gas, and telecommunication utilities while installing infrastructure underground. Such coordination, while difficult across agencies, can result in cost savings and minimize disruptions.
- To the extent possible, consider long-term or strategic plans developed by utilities during the development review process.
- Work with electric utilities to promote the use of energy efficient practices.
Example: energy-efficient street lighting.
- Coordinate with Nicor to ensure that their facilities are adequately protected. This should include coordination of land use and growth, particularly on the north side of Town.

IP1.1j—Continually Educate and Engage Residents, Particularly the Development Community, on Infrastructure-Related Issues and the Need for Compact Development

WATER SYSTEM

System Overview: The Town of Normal's water comes from 15 active groundwater wells that draw water from the Mahomet Aquifer, and six of those wells are outside the corporate limits. The wells have a combined capacity of nearly 12 million gallons/day (mgd). The existing municipal water distribution system consists of approximately 200 miles of water mains, four elevated tanks, two booster stations and one pump station, a reservoir, and a water treatment plant. The treatment plant is adequately sized to treat all the existing raw water capacity. Current usage is a little below four million gallons per day, so there is plenty of excess capacity for future growth. Staff continuously monitors the productivity of the wells to ensure efficiency. Staff also checks the distribution system for leaks every other year using acoustic technology. Given the benefits witnessed by this program, the department plans to continue doing this for the foreseeable future.

Capital Investments: The Water Department is currently focused on maintaining the existing system in good condition. Capital investment projects, both short and long-term, include:

- **Smart Meter Deployment:** In line with industry trends, the Water Department has begun deploying Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), or Smart Meters. This technology allows staff to be more efficient by reading the meters remotely. The data gathered can be used to identify leaks, damaged or broken meters, and other issues more efficiently. In addition to their administrative benefits, this technology has the potential to help residents by providing real-time usage data and enabling them to be more efficient. Based on the Town's published Community Investment Plan FY 2017 to 2022, the water enterprise fund is the main source of funding for this project and is approved below the desired funding levels. At this rate, rolling out the program will take longer than expected.
- **Connecting the North and Northeast elevated tanks:** This is a long-term and lower priority issue. Staff identified a need to connect the elevated water tanks on the north and northeast sides of town to provide redundancy during maintenance and extra help with fire suppression.
- **Lead in water:** While lead has not yet been an issue in the Town of Normal, the national conversation on lead in drinking water highlighted the need for additional monitoring of water infrastructure in older neighborhoods. Any planned or emergency infrastructure improvements in these neighborhoods should take this into consideration.
- **Water distribution systems on the west side (old Metro Zone Area):** the City of Bloomington currently provides water on the west side of Normal as part of an inter-governmental agreement (Metro Zone). As of 2017, the Metro Zone has been unilaterally dissolved by Bloomington. However, the City of Bloomington agreed to service this area. While not a high priority, Town should investigate the merits and demerits of investing in its own water distribution infrastructure in the old Metro Zone area for future predictability.

Finances: Water department operations and infrastructure investments are funded by an enterprise fund (the Water Fund). The Water Fund's financial position has been and continues to be strong, both for operational needs and capital investment projects.¹ The Town Council just approved a 2% rate increase in FY 2016—2017 to help ensure the long-term financial stability of the Water Fund. Town staff continues to monitor the health of this fund closely and anticipates nominal increases, if any. A potential financial challenge could be protecting the revenue generated (tied to the amount of water used) while promoting water conservation efforts.

Strategy IP1.2—Ensure the Availability of Reliable and Adequate Water Supply and Delivery Systems to Provide Safe and High-Quality Potable Water at Adequate Pressures

IP1.2a—Continue to be an Active Partner in Regional Water-Supply Planning and Protection Efforts

IP1.2b—Continue to Monitor and Maintain Existing Water Distribution Systems to Ensure Good Condition

The Town of Normal does not have a master plan for water distribution systems. Given the general stability of the system, excess water capacity to accommodate both current and future growth, and staff's proactive approach to maintenance, a master plan may not be necessary at this time. However, Town staff should continue to monitor performance of the wells and leak-detection programs to ensure maintenance of these systems is in good repair.

IP1.2c—Explore Alternative Rate Structures that Protect Revenue Streams While Promoting Water Conservation Efforts

In line with the vision and goals of this plan and the Town's Sustainability Plan (2035 Report), staff currently promotes water conservation efforts. However, the inherent contradiction between water conservation efforts and the fiscal sustainability of the Water Fund must be recognized as a challenge. Staff should investigate alternative rate structures such as inclining block rates (water price increases with increasing blocks of water use) that protect revenue streams while promoting conservation.

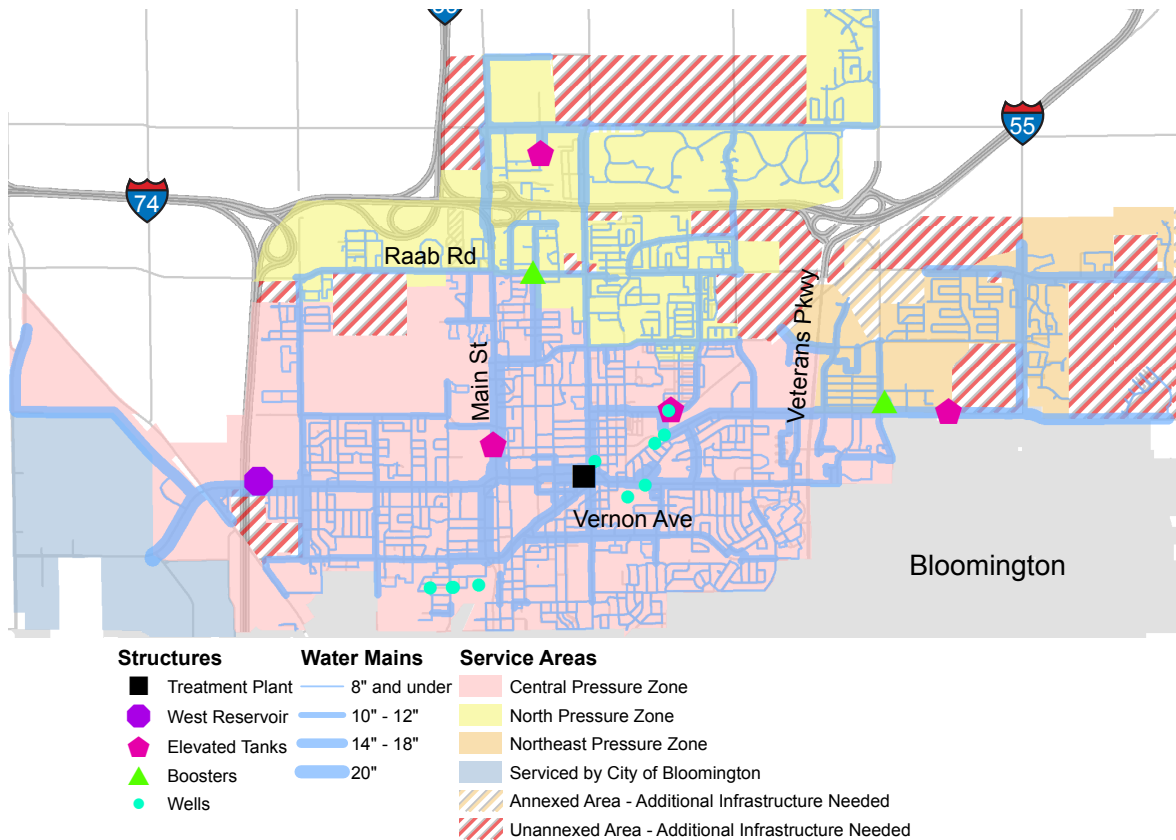
IP1.2d—Evaluate the Merits and Demerits, Efficient Routes, and Expansion Alternatives for Long-Term Capital Investment Projects

These include 1) connecting the North and the Northeast elevated tanks and 2) expanding the water distribution network to the old Metro Zone area currently being served by City of Bloomington.

IP1.2e—Utilize Appropriate Technologies to Increase Efficiencies

The Water Department is currently in the process of installing Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI). Currently this program is on a five-year roll-out but is underfunded. Staff should investigate grants and other funding sources in addition to the Water Fund for speedy roll out of AMIs throughout the Town. This project can greatly contribute to the Town's Smart City initiative.

MAP IPI: Town of Normal Water Service Areas



SANITARY SEWER AND STORM WATER SEWER SYSTEMS

System Overview: The Town of Normal Public Works and Engineering Departments manage separate sanitary sewer and storm water systems. The Town’s sanitary sewer collection system comprises nearly 180 miles of collector and trunk sewers and thousands of manholes. Collector sewers are small 8–16” pipes, collecting the sewage from the individual lateral to trunk sewers. The trunk sewers then connect collectors to interceptor sewers, owned and operated by the Bloomington Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD). The Town’s sewer system also includes seven sanitary sewer pump stations and force mains to serve areas that cannot be served by gravity—predominantly the northeastern part of town. Supporting developments with pump stations is an expensive endeavor, and staff wants to minimize such developments in the future.

The storm water system is made up of over 100 miles of storm sewers, 1 stormsewer pump station, 80 culverts, eight detention ponds spanning 2.3 acres (while there are a total of 52 wet and dry detention ponds within the Town, most are privately owned and operated), and over 5,000 inlets. Regulatory pressures have led to an increase in storm water program costs for all municipalities, including Normal. In 2006, the Town adopted a storm water utility fee, which is assessed to all Normal property owners, to address revenue shortfalls.

Capital Investment: The Public Works Department’s interest lies in maintaining the existing sewer and storm water systems in good condition. Staff prioritized the sanitary sewer investments over storm sewer investments based on the criticality of the sanitary systems.

Sewer: Normal recently completed its first Sanitary Sewer Master Plan. Recommendations include:

- Asset management: The plan identified a limited understanding of existing sewer infrastructure, some of which is over 100 years old, as a major challenge. It recommended creating an inventory of the entire sewer system in the Town’s GIS system and populating necessary attributes for efficient management; cleaning and televising all sewers, on a priority scale, over the next five years; and

rating the system using the Pipeline Assessment and Certification Program (PACP), with ratings linked to GIS. This project, when completed, will contribute to the achievement of the Town's smart city goals.

- Critical projects: The plan identified several critical projects, including force main overflow in the Ironwood area, the lining of brick sewers to address Inflow and Infiltration issues, and pump station improvements that need immediate attention. Inflow and infiltration (I & I) are terms used to describe the ways that groundwater and stormwater enter into dedicated wastewater or sanitary sewer systems.

Storm Water: There is no comprehensive understanding of the condition and needs of the Town's stormwater system. Some information was gathered as part of the feasibility study in 2005 that aided in establishing a storm water utility rate. Revenues generated by this fund are being used for projects geared toward improving water quality, such as Sugar Creek stream bank restoration and maintenance. Efficient storm water asset management necessitates a better understanding of asset conditions and future needs. Other short- and long-term projects include:

- Proposed National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) regulations on Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4s) that would impose additional regulations regarding road salt and nitrates, adding costs to current operations and maintenance.
- Town staff prefers regional detention basins over smaller basins to achieve efficiencies. For example, a regional storm water detention basin may be the most efficient way to develop the currently un-annexed area by Towanda Avenue and Raab Road in the future.

Finances: Sanitary sewer operations and infrastructure investments are funded by an enterprise fund (the Sewer Fund). The Town's Finance Department rated this fund as "negative" in its FY 2015–2016 Financial Trends and Conditions Report and characterized it as being in a weak fiscal position to sufficiently meet the system's operational and capital needs in the future. The Sanitary Sewer Master Plan identified capital investment needs at \$6.1 million in the next five years (2017–2021) and \$9.5 million by 2026 and proposed a rate increase to cover these needs.

Storm water operations and infrastructure investments are funded by an enterprise fund (the Storm Water Fund). This fund appears to be stable. However, a comprehensive assessment of the system will be necessary to determine its fiscal stability.

Bloomington Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD) is a sanitary district that provides wastewater treatment for Bloomington and Normal. It operates two treatment plants, one on Bloomington's West Side (the "West Plant") and a newer one in Randolph Township (the "Southeast Plant," or "SE Plant" for short) that treats wastewater from east of Veterans' Parkway. BNWRD is anticipating the need to invest significantly in the West Plant within the next five years, an estimated \$150-160 million, to meet the new regulations. In addition, peak storm water discharges to the SE Plant exceed the plant's peak hydraulic capacity and necessitate expanding that capacity at a great expense to taxpayers [*See Community Snapshot and Outreach Report for more information*]. BNWRD staff believes that working closely with Town of Normal and City of Bloomington staff to reduce storm water I & I can save taxpayers this additional expense.



Anderson Park featuring a lush riparian buffer along Sugar Creek



Detention pond near the Blackstone Trails subdivision featuring native plants along its shore and an encircling bike trail

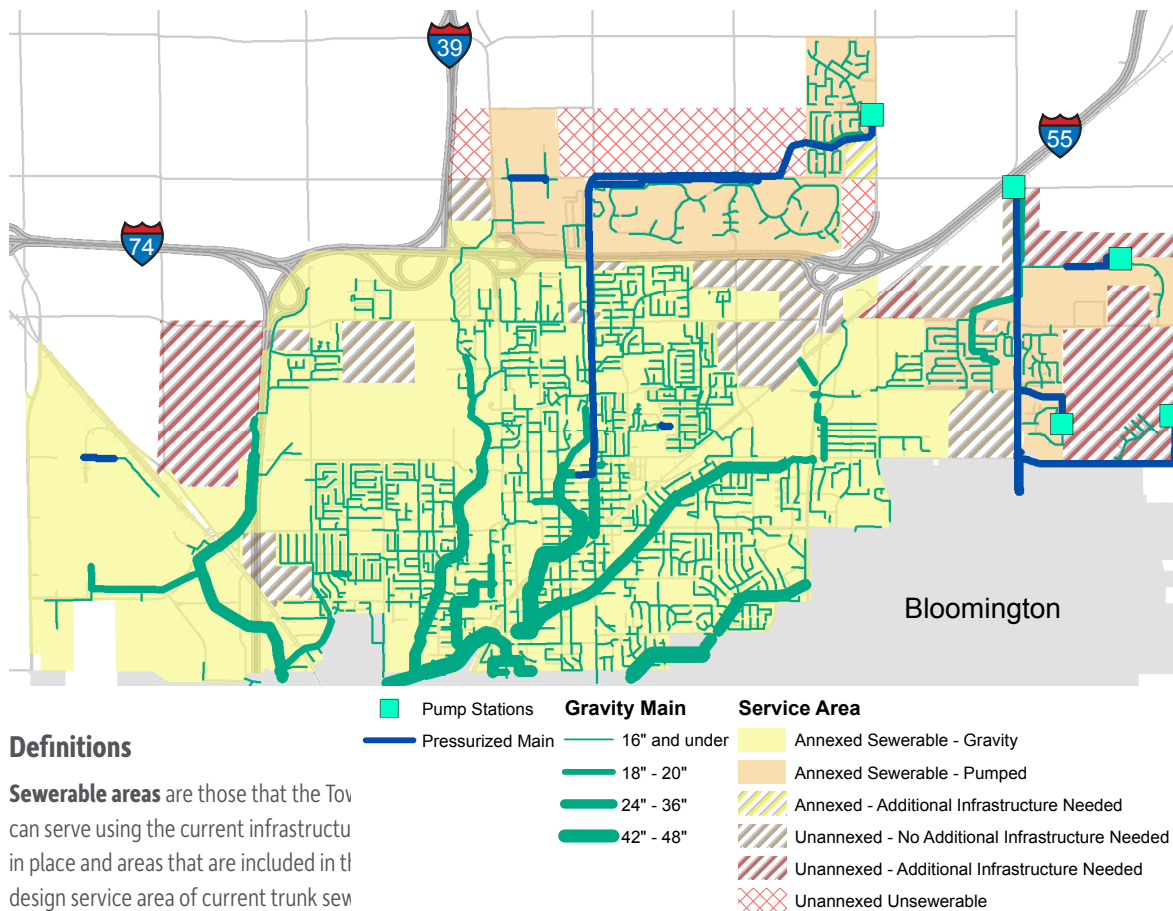
Strategy IP1.3—Provide Reliable and Efficient Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Collection Systems to Protect the Public Health, Safety, and the Natural Environment

IP1.3a—Fund the Implementation of the New Sanitary Sewer Master Plan

This plan, adopted by the Council in July 2017, identifies several strategic and long-term improvements to the sanitary sewer system, to the tune of over \$15 million, within the next decade. Funding this plan adequately is important for the long-term growth and development of the community.

IP1.3b—Work with BNWRD to Identify and Mitigate I/I Issues in the Sanitary Sewer System

MAP IP2: Town of Normal Sewer Service Areas



Definitions

Sewerable areas are those that the Town can serve using the current infrastructure in place and areas that are included in the design service area of current trunk sewer or pump station service areas.

Unsewerable areas require significant additional investment on the Town's part to be served.

IP1.3d—Develop a Town-wide Stormwater Master Plan

Such a plan should comprehensively inventory and rate all storm water assets and related challenges using an industry standard rating system, identify improvements and prioritize implementation based on criticality.

IP1.3e—Continue to Require that All New Developments Provide Appropriate Storm Water Detention Facilities to Protect Water Quality

IP1.3f—Continue to Monitor and Mitigate Urban Stream Bank Erosion

The Town maintains 14.3 miles of creek within its boundaries. Beginning 2013, the Town implemented many streambank restoration projects to prevent erosion and protect water quality. The Town should continue to fund those projects.

IP1.3g—Utilize Green Infrastructure Solutions for Infrastructure Management,² Where Feasible

- The Town employs a no-mow policy along riparian buffers. This policy is both fiscally and environmentally responsible. The Town should encourage BNWRD to employ the same best practices to prevent erosion and improve water quality. (Q)
- The Town along with City of Bloomington and BNWRD should actively investigate the feasibility of green infrastructure solutions when the need for rebuilding the West Plant arises.

IP1.3h—Encourage Low Impact Development (LID) [See Figure IP2]

- Review existing ordinances and codes to determine opportunities for incorporating LID techniques. Example: Allowing commercial developments to build a portion of their “required” parking lot and leaving the rest as green space until such need arises. (Q)
- Identify appropriate LID standard engineering details as part of site development planning. (Q)
- Evaluate current construction methods to determine where LID techniques could be used to improve stormwater management.

Low Impact Development (LID) is an innovative approach to site planning, design and development that reduces stormwater impacts. Its basic principle is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source using uniformly distributed, decentralized micro-scale controls. LID's goal is to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source.

IP1.3i—Continue to Explore Opportunities to Establish a Regional Stormwater Detention Basin in the Area Bound by Shelbourne Avenue to the West, Veterans Parkway to the East, the Railroad to the South, and the Interstate to the North

FIGURE IP2: Low Impact Development

SOURCE: Origin of Man-Made Stormwater Runoff			
■ Parking and streets	■ Structure runoff	■ Alternative sources	
■ Hardscape areas	■ Landscape areas		
ACTION: Method of Managing Stormwater Runoff			
■ Convey	■ Infiltrate	■ Store	
■ Filter	■ Evapo-transporate	■ Reuse	
TOOLS: Means to Accomplish Actions with Technical Variations			
Green Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Standard curb cut ■ Curb cut with sidewing ■ Concrete flush curb ■ Grated curb cut ■ Curb cut with sediment capture ■ Wheelstop curb 	Bioretention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Vegetated retention basin ■ Bioretention cell ■ Planter 	Constructed Wetlands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Constructed wetlands 	Landscape* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tree Preservation ■ Soil Amendment ■ Impervious Surface Reduction ■ Plant Selection
Vegetated Swale <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Meandering or linear ■ Restored wash 	Permeable Paving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stabilized aggregate ■ Porous asphalt ■ Porous concrete ■ Structural grids ■ Permeable Pavers 	Green Roof <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rooftop garden ■ Downspout disconnection 	Rainwater Harvesting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cisterns above ground ■ Cisterns below ground

Source: Mesa, Arizona LID Toolkit

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

System Overview: The Town of Normal manages 425 lane-miles of streets. This extensive system includes arterial and collector streets providing connections to destinations throughout the community, and local streets primarily used to reach residential areas. The Town also maintains approximately 15 miles of Constitution Trail, 8 miles of on-street bicycle infrastructure and over 220 miles of sidewalks. The Town’s multimodal and intermodal transportation facility at Uptown Station brings together Amtrak passenger rail, Connect Transit public transit service and inter-city bus carriers. Public transit and private cabs also provide connections to the Central Illinois Regional Airport in Bloomington.

Capital Investments: The Engineering and Public Works departments oversee the management of the transportation system, with Parks and Recreation also participating in Constitution Trail management. This work requires ongoing interaction and coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation, City of Bloomington, McLean County, Connect Transit, rail companies, and other private transportation providers. The Town attempts to align its capital investments with other jurisdictions and private entities to streamline transportation improvements and reduce costs. The Town prioritizes the maintenance of existing systems in good condition over transportation system expansion. Approximately \$3.8 million is budgeted in the current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for concrete street rehabilitation and street resurfacing at various locations. The Town also engages in ongoing improvements to sidewalks, including ADA compliance, and enhances safety through the installation of traffic signals at intersections where warranted. In addition, the following Capital Improvement Projects are documented in the TIP and/or the Town’s budget:

1. Uptown Underpass: The Town is obtaining environmental clearances and developing designs for a potential underpass to provide grade-separated access for Amtrak passengers and the general public crossing the Union Pacific railroad tracks, in the plaza between Uptown Station and the Children's Discovery Museum. This underpass is intended to provide safe passage between Uptown Circle and the area to the south now designated as Uptown 2.0, which is the next major redevelopment area in Uptown Normal. Development of the underpass will become increasingly important as freight train traffic grows and as high-speed rail service is fully implemented.
2. Sustainable modes of transportation: The Town continues to implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan adopted in 2009. Ongoing capital investments include resurfacing the Constitution Trail, building additional trail connections within the Town, adding on-street bicycle improvements and extending the Historic Route 66 Bicycle Trail. The recent adoption of a Complete Streets Policy by the Town will mean increased focus on the implementation of bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements to Normal streets.
3. East Side Highway: The final study regarding the proposed East Side Highway is complete, and as of this writing the resulting Environmental Assessment is being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration. Given the scale of this project and the uncertainty of the necessary federal funding, there is no expectation that the highway would be built during this plan horizon period. In the meantime, both Normal and Bloomington will monitor traffic levels and patterns as called for in the East Side Highway Study. Presumably, if both Normal and Bloomington fully employ the smart growth development principles expressed in the land use plans, the highway may never be needed.

Finances: The majority of the transportation work is funded through state Motor Fuel Tax (MFT) revenues and the Roadway Fund along with local motor fuel tax, sales tax, and general fund revenues. State and local MFT funds are based on the amount of fuel used. This greatly reduces their ability to keep pace with the cost of transportation system maintenance as vehicles continue to be designed for greater fuel efficiency and as people drive fewer miles. There is also an inherent conflict between collecting revenue generated by fuel consumption while advocating for more sustainable, lower fuel consuming transportation. Outside sources of funding are also uncertain, as federal funding for transportation is also falling far behind the cost of maintaining the nation's infrastructure. This is particularly impactful as the cost of major projects such as the underpass continue to escalate.

Connect Transit

Connect Transit provides transit service for Normal and Bloomington. In recent years Connect ridership has dramatically increased following a re-branding initiative, new marketing strategies, and a complete overhaul of the route system. Connect has also begun to participate in local planning initiatives and has clearly indicated that in order for transit to serve the community most effectively, new development must be transit-oriented. This presents the Town with another partner in its efforts to pursue compact, efficient development. Connect Transit's challenges include the constant need to upgrade its fleet at great expense. Current local funding levels cannot cover the cost of fleet upgrades and overall operations, and the State of Illinois has proven to be an unreliable source of income.

Illinois Department of Transportation

The Town, often working with the City of Bloomington and the McLean County Highway Department, maintains a close working relationship with various departments within the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). IDOT is the gatekeeper for much of the federal funding that the Town is eligible to seek, so preserving this connection is critical. For example, IDOT support and cooperation has been vital to securing resources for elements of the Uptown redevelopment, including Uptown Circle and Uptown Station itself. In addition, significant transportation corridors in the Town, such as Main Street and Veterans' Parkway, are under the state's jurisdiction, and thus outside of the Town's control. In order for essential work to be done, there must be continued cooperation and coordination with IDOT.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

An MPO is a regional transportation policy-making organization composed of representatives from local government and transportation implementers. MPO's ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs are based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3C) planning process at a regional level. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this planning process.

McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) is the designated MPO for the Bloomington-Normal urbanized area. Current members include the City of Bloomington, Town of Normal, McLean County, Connect Transit and the Airport Authority, along with IDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration.

Strategy IP1.4—Maintain a Safe, Reliable, and Efficient Transportation Network to Serve All Users

IP1.4a—Continue to Work with MCRPC and Other Partners to Address Transportation Issues at a Regional Level

- Participate in the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) planning efforts, including the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and active membership on the Transportation Technical and Policy Committees.
- Participate actively in periodic updates of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and other transportation studies (Example: Main Street Feasibility Study).

IP1.4b—Provide Data and Support to MCRPC for Increased Utility of the Transportation Model, Transportation Dashboard, and Other Data-Driven Initiatives

- Make relevant transportation data available to MCRPC at regular intervals.
Example: inventory of PASER³ street rating and other condition ratings on sidewalk and trail.
- Advise on structure and operability of MCRPC transportation data dashboard.
- Provide available data on trail counts.

IP1.4c—Advance the Objectives of the Forthcoming LRTP (BN Mobile)

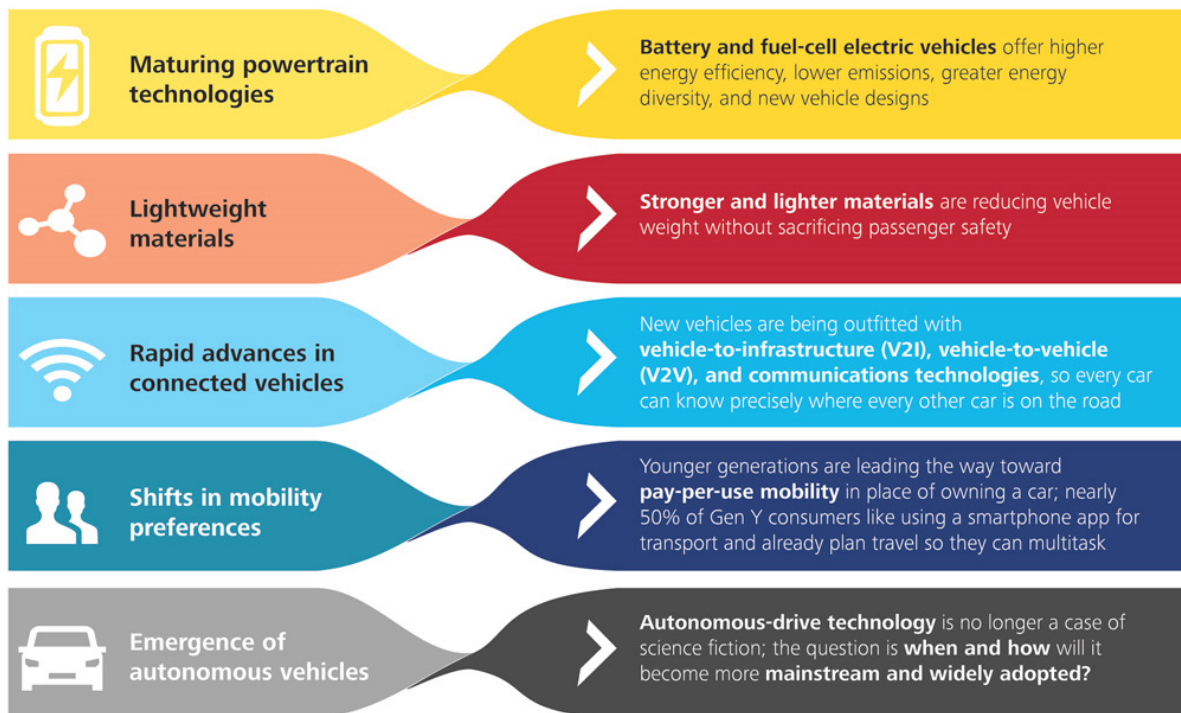
- Maintain the current transportation system in good condition.
- Focus resources on strategic improvements to the transportation system.
- Emphasize thoughtful expansion of options such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, noting their benefits for transportation sustainability and public health. *[See Health & Sustainability Element for detailed discussion on bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements.]*
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
 - The Town continuously improves its bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in accordance with its bicycle and pedestrian master plan. *[See Infrastructure & Public Safety Element of the Community Snapshot and Outreach Report for a list of implemented projects.]*
 - This plan recommends implementing Complete Streets and Vision Zero policies more aggressively. Prioritize implementation near popular destinations such as parks, schools, transit stops, and Neighborhood Centers. *[See Health & Sustainability Element for further discussion.]*
- Promote programs that support walking, bicycling and transit.
- Focus efforts on Transit Oriented Development. This could include additional residential

development in Uptown and enhanced coordination with Connect Transit on transit-supportive residential densities through redevelopment or new development particularly in areas with 30 minutes or better transit service.

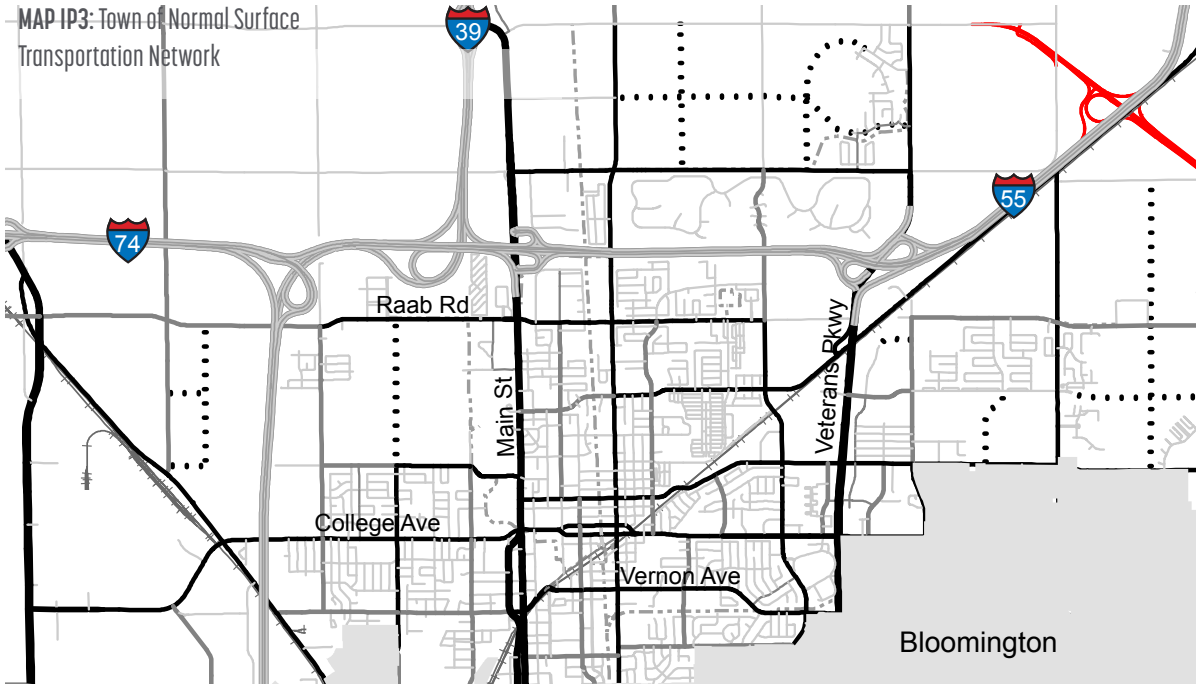
- Continue, and if possible expand, staff cooperation between Normal and Bloomington to:
 - Coordinate street and trail projects
 - Seek out opportunities to jointly participate in regionally significant projects that benefit the Town
 - Cooperate in sharing information and resources where feasible
 - Solicit the participation of people representing disadvantaged groups or areas in the design of transportation programs and opportunities
 - Create awareness among policy makers and public of the increasing transportation funding shortfall
 - Develop a project selection methodology and criteria which also support neighborhood redevelopment and economic revitalization in underserved areas
 - Continue to site, build and maintain transportation infrastructure with attention to environmental impact
 - Design transportation infrastructure to support intermodal freight and appropriate access for larger and fully loaded vehicles
 - Participate in the ongoing regional process to analyze transportation trends and technical advances, as well as their potential role as drivers of shifting transportation choices and economic and social change.

[See Corridors Chapter in the Planning Framework section for additional discussion on transportation corridors.]

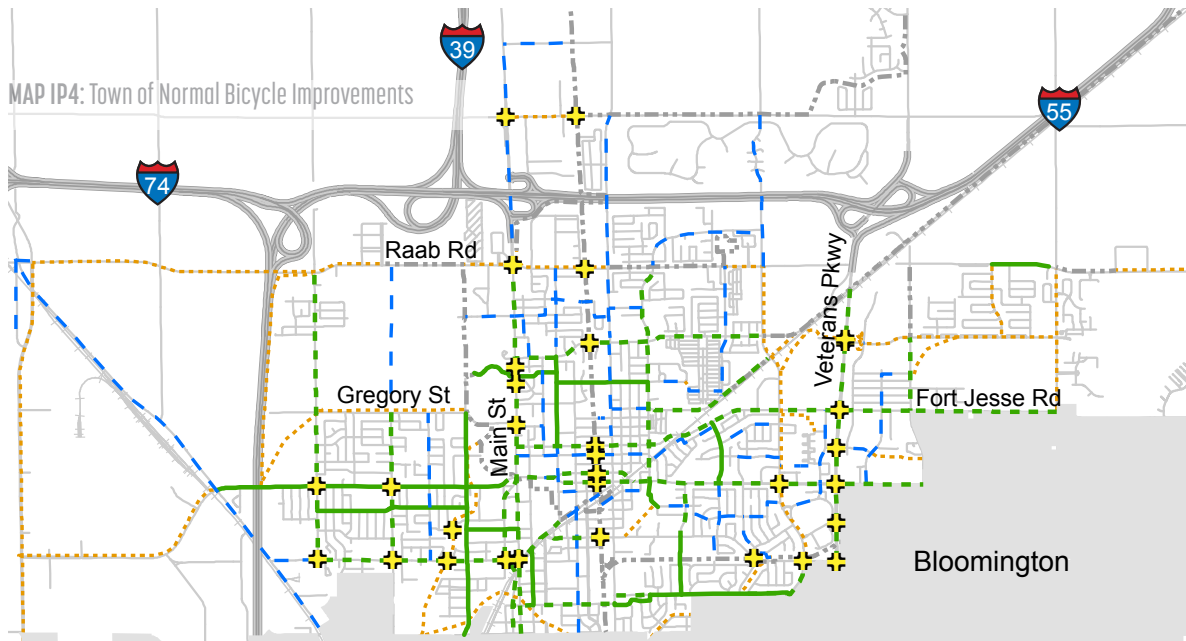
FIGURE IP3: Converging Forces Transforming the Future Evolution of Automotive Transportation and Mobility



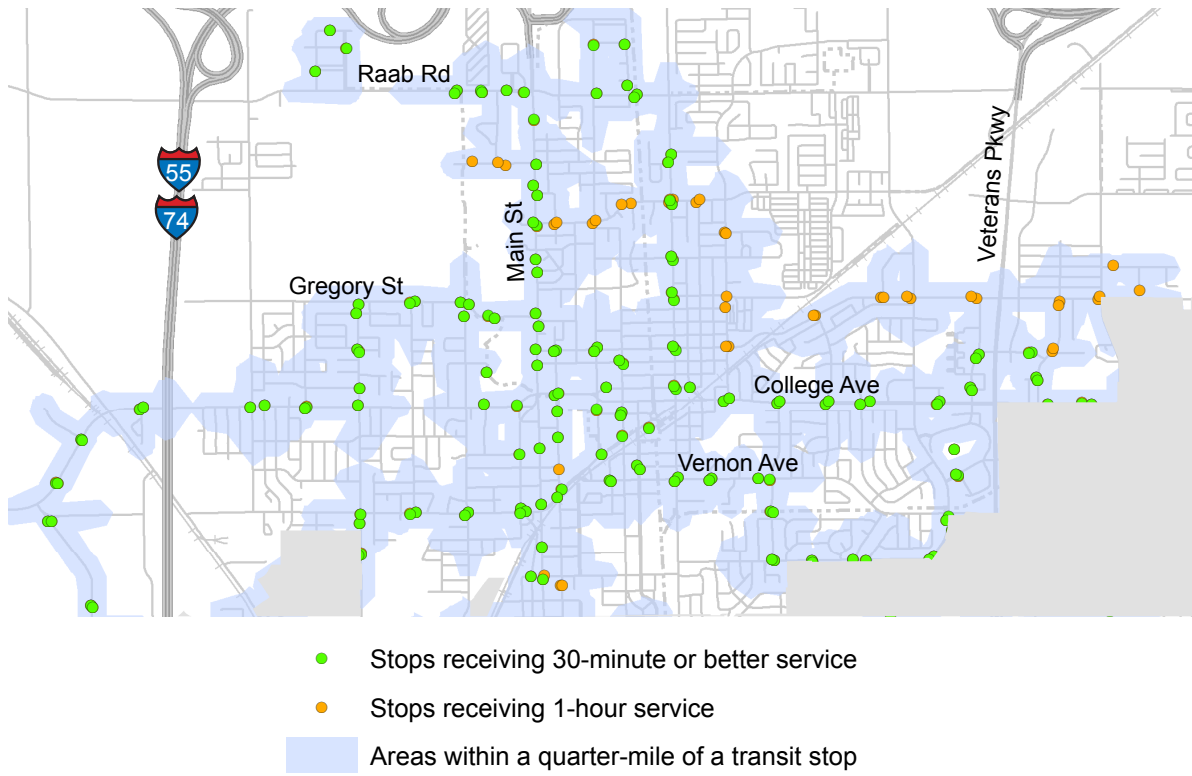
MAP IP3: Town of Normal Surface Transportation Network



MAP IP4: Town of Normal Bicycle Improvements



MAP IP5: Town of Normal Transit Service Areas



Technology Infrastructure

There are three main wired broadband residential service providers and many wireless service providers in Normal. Wired providers include Frontier (DSL), XFINITY from Comcast (CABLE) and the new provider MetroNet (Fiber). There are ten service providers in addition to the Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN) serving businesses in the community. Except for CIRBN, the Town has no control over any of the telecommunications providers. The public sector and educational institutions banded together and created CIRBN with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds in 2014. As one of the key founding partners of CIRBN, the Town of Normal continues to be a key stakeholder in the management and operations of the network. In this capacity, the Town should work in close collaboration with CIRBN to strategically expand its footprint in Normal. [See Strategy EV 2.5 for additional discussion on this topic.]

Strategy IP1.5—Build Quality Telecommunications Technology Infrastructure

IP1.5a—Ensure the Availability of Quality Broadband Infrastructure to All the Activity Centers for Their Long-Term Vibrancy

The majority of the Town’s Activity Centers are adequately served either by the Central Illinois Regional Broadband network (CIRBN) or other providers. The Town should work with CIRBN to strategically expand its network to areas that are currently not well served. These include:

- West side—Mitsubishi/Rivian Area (Regional Center): With the exception of Mitsubishi/Rivian property, this area is generally underserved by technology infrastructure. The expansion of CIRBN infrastructure to this area will ensure viability of this area as a regional employment center.
- Route 66 cultural center along Pine Street between Beech Street and Linden Street (Local Center): The expansion of CIRBN’s infrastructure to this area will help small local businesses as well as enhance the Town’s Route 66 tourism efforts.
- Hovey Avenue and Cottage Avenue (Neighborhood Center anchored by Jewel Osco)
- College Avenue and Garden Road (Neighborhood Center that is home to Carl’s Ice Cream)

These areas were discussed with CIRBN’s Executive Director at a cursory level and were deemed strategic growth opportunities for CIRBN as well. Expansions to the Neighborhood and Local Centers are estimated at approximately \$25K to \$50K. Expansion to the west side must be studied.

IP1.5b—Provide Free, Reliable, and Secure Wi-Fi in Parks and Public Places

Normal currently provides free Wi-Fi in a number of parks including One Normal Plaza, Anderson Park, Fairview Park, and Maxwell Park. The Town should strive to keep the infrastructure up to date to ensure reliable and secure Wi-Fi in these areas. When feasible, the Town should expand to other parks, particularly those located close to existing CIRBN infrastructure, such as Rosa Parks Commons, Shepard Park, and Fell Park.

The Town also provides free Wi-Fi in Uptown. Currently the Town, in partnership with CIRBN, is in the process of upgrading that technology to provide up to 1 Gigabyte Wi-Fi speeds. The Town must consider expanding this service to Uptown South when that development occurs.

IP1.5c—Partner with Connect Transit to Provide Free Wi-Fi Near Transit Stops

Wi-Fi availability near transit stops can serve multiple purposes and help position the Town of Normal as a Smart City. Coupled with a power supply, the right equipment and Wi-Fi, the transit stops can host many technologies such as interactive information stations. The Town should utilize the Innovation District as a pilot area to test this concept in partnership with Connect Transit, CIRBN, Illinois State University (ISU), and others.

The Town should also encourage Connect Transit to investigate the feasibility of providing free Wi-Fi on buses.

FIRE SYSTEMS

System Overview: The Town of Normal Fire Department (NFD) provides fire suppression, fire prevention, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). NFD currently has three staffed fire stations with sixty firefighters to serve the community: the Headquarters station at 606 S Main Street, Fire Station 2 at 1300 E. College Avenue, and Fire Station 3 at 1200 E Raab Road. NFD is equipped with five engine/pumpers, two trucks, four paramedic ambulances, a Paramedic Chase Vehicle, a heavy rescue truck, four trailers (one each for technical rescue, educational, fire investigation, and heavy duty), three prevention vehicles, utility vehicles, and vehicles for chiefs.

ISO Rating: The Insurance Services Office (ISO) surveys communities on a regular basis to determine their Public Protection Classification. A classification of 1 to 10, 1 being the best and 10 being the worst, is assigned based on several factors including response times, equipment, certifications, water supply, and dispatch. ISO ratings are used by the insurance industry for determining insurance rates for properties within the Town. Per the ISO survey conducted in 2013, Town of Normal maintained a class 2 ISO rating. This puts Normal among the 1% of communities nationwide that have achieved this rating.

Fire Response Times: Response time is computed by adding alarm processing time, turnout time, and travel time. Alarm processing time includes the time from the minute the dispatcher received a call to the point of notification to the responding agency. Turnout time includes the time from when the call was received to when the vehicle leaves the station. Travel time is the time elapsed between leaving the station to arriving at the scene. The nationally accepted standard is a six (6) minute response time (one minute each for alarm processing and turnout time + four minutes travel time). NFD strives to accomplish this benchmark on 90% of its calls. In 2016, the NFD responded in under six minutes 92.3% of the time.

Capital Investments: A multi-year strategic planning process determined that the conditions and locations of the current fire stations did not adequately meet the requirements for emergency response services for the Town of Normal. After thorough analysis of calls for service volume, growth trends, and travel distances, the Town Council, in 2013, directed staff to pursue a plan to relocate its three fire stations over the next decade to optimize response times and effectively serve the community. Two key assumptions of the 2013 NFD fire station relocation plan include 1) the Town of Normal corporate limits will not grow much further in any direction and 2) Mitsubishi Motors, located in the community on the west side during the planning process, will continue to generate low call volume like it did until 2013. With that plan in place, the following capital investments are anticipated in the next decade

- Relocation of all three fire stations: The new headquarters was prioritized first and was completed in fall 2017. This new station (LEED Bronze certified) is located near ISU campus and Uptown, two areas with high call volumes, with easy access to major thoroughfares. Station 2 is scheduled to be relocated by 2019, and Station 3 by 2021 .
- Information Technology (IT) upgrades: NFD recently installed Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) on all its apparatus, a technology that improved run times. NFD is committed to making other necessary software and hardware upgrades that improve internal operational efficiencies and external communications. To that effect, NFD will continue to incur some costs over the next few years to upgrade its own IT systems and those of its partner agencies *[METCOM related information below]*.

Finances: The Fire Department's operations are paid through the General Fund. The cost to relocate the fire stations is paid through the issuance of bonds. The Town issued approximately \$8 million dollars in general bonds to pay for the Headquarters station. The cost to relocate the other two fire stations has not been determined yet.

NFD's apparatus acquisition and maintenance is funded by the Vehicle and Equipment Reserve Fund, which is used to accumulate resources to fund the replacement of all the Town's vehicle and equipment needs. The Finance Department rated this fund as Positive with Caution for FY 2016.

FIRE SYSTEMS *continued—*

McLean County Emergency Telephone Communications (METCOM)

METCOM provides fire, EMS, and police dispatch services for the Town of Normal and the majority of McLean County aside from the City of Bloomington. The Town of Normal is a financial contributor and an active governing partner in METCOM operations. METCOM's capital investment needs will therefore have an impact on Town's budget. METCOM is currently in the process of investing over \$85K to upgrade its dispatch system. This upgrade will allow seamless integration and exchange of data across agencies.

No major capital improvements are planned in the near future. However, changes to the state 911 reauthorization legislation might necessitate additional investments that are currently unpredictable.

Emergency Management

The McLean County Area Emergency Management Agency (EMA), staffed by 30 people, serves to coordinate relief in the event of a disaster in McLean County. Town of Normal staff work closely with EMA and Illinois State University on community-wide emergency preparedness issues.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

There is a great deal of cooperation between the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington fire departments. Both are part of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS), which provides mutual aid to all member agencies. Fire response times on the east aide (east of Veterans Parkway along Fort Jesse Road) are an issue for both communities and continue to present an opportunity for future collaboration.

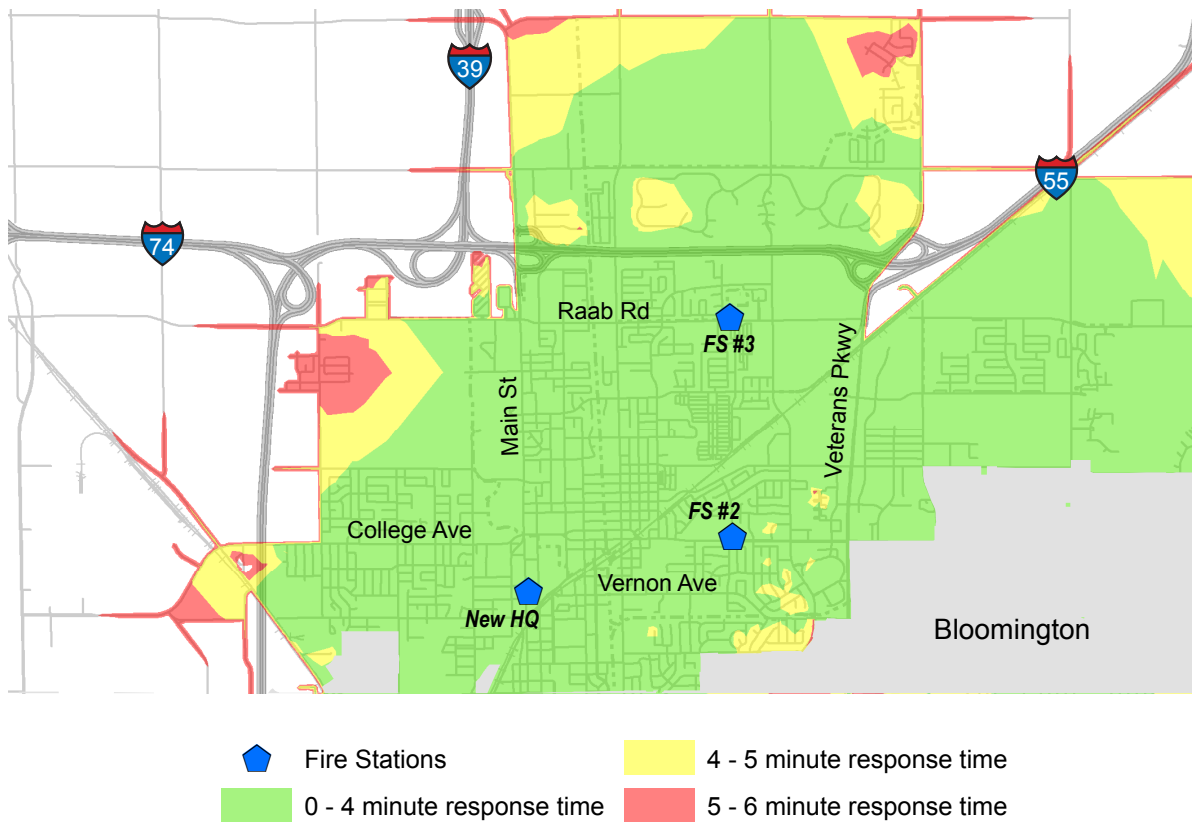


Strategy IP1.6—Provide Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Services to Protect the Lives, Health, Safety, and Livelihoods of Residents and Businesses

IP1.6a—Ensure that Land Development Policies Support NFD's Goal of Responding to 90% of Calls Within a 6-Minute Response Time

- The Town should adopt a comprehensive annexation policy consistent with the long-term vision and goals established in this plan. (Q)
- Ensure a connected street pattern, where possible. Such connectivity can improve emergency response times by providing several routes to any given address.
- The west side of Normal, particularly the Mitsubishi/Rivian area, is in need of major redevelopment. Any subarea planning to trigger development in this area should be carefully coordinated with the Fire Department.

MAP IP6: Town of Normal Fire Service Area



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Town's community facilities include a collection of buildings, open spaces, and service areas that comprise the Town's public service infrastructure and improve quality of life for everyone. This section also considers the role of certain community facilities like schools, which are not owned and operated by the Town but serve several important functions beyond their primary roles. When paired with playgrounds, sports fields, or Town parks, schools are a catalyst for neighborhood activities and development that create new choices for residents and create the flourishing atmosphere that enhances a sense of place. Map YY identifies the geographic locations of all community facilities addressed during the planning process.

- **Parks and Recreation:** The Parks and Recreation Department oversees and maintains all park properties. Improvements are predominantly guided by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, updated in 2015. This plan includes a comprehensive inventory of all parks along with their conditions and needs, level of service, and geographic distribution. It identifies the west side of Normal as underserved by neighborhood parks based on a variety of criteria and recommends acquiring land in that area if and when it becomes available. Additional facility recommendations include more green space in Uptown, a new soccer complex, and an indoor community/aquatic center.
- **Fire Stations:** *[See Fire Systems for more discussion on capital improvements.]*
- **Water Department facilities:** The Water Department is responsible for the oversight and maintenance of its buildings. *[See Water Systems for more discussion on capital improvements.]*
- **Other Town facilities:** The Facilities Management Department is responsible for all other Town-owned and -operated facilities, including Uptown Station/City Hall, the Normal Theater, the Children's Museum, public works buildings, police facilities, parking decks, and other service buildings. The department completed a Facilities and Energy Management Master Plan in 2014 that included facility conditions assessments and energy audits for 11 Town facilities. This assessment revealed that many of the facilities were in good condition but identified a wide range of energy efficiency performance issues; identified the needs of each building at the component level and recommended systematic replacement; and recommended enhanced and ongoing data gathering to assist in dynamic facilities planning.

The Uptown South redevelopment may necessitate the relocation of the Police Department facility. Given that the department's functions are increasingly becoming mobile, meaning officers can conduct much of their business in their cars, the need for the administration building to be located in Uptown may not be as critical.

- **Normal Public Library (NPL):** The NPL's staff and Board of Trustees, a group of seven elected officials, oversee the operations and maintenance of this facility. The NPL has been the subject of much discussion and planning since 2015. Its current facility, located at 206 West College Avenue, is out of room to grow in place. After reviewing options thoroughly, it has been established that the new facility will become the anchor for development in Uptown South. The new facility will be double its current size, with a significant amount of space dedicated for community activities. This facility is currently in the design phase. Initial estimates for its construction were upwards of \$20 million. The Town Council and staff have voiced their strong support for the new library's Uptown location and have been integrally involved in the planning process of this facility.

- **Schools:** Unit 5 is the designated public school district serving the Town of Normal. It is governed by its own board, a group of seven elected officials. Town officials and Unit 5 work cooperatively in many ways. The most notable from a land use perspective is collocation of schools and parks—a model that has served the community well for many decades. However, there is room for improvement in other areas. Unit 5 does not have a formal process for involving Town staff on school siting issues. The Town has in the past had to reluctantly accommodate new schools along the edges of the community, against the spirit of their comprehensive plans. On the other hand, the Town does not have a formal process to alert Unit 5 of annexation agreements or development proposals being reviewed and approved. Too often the schools are faced with accommodating new growth with little to no opportunity to provide meaningful feedback. Neither of these situations is ideal, and there is a strong desire among current staff and policy makers on both sides to increase collaboration on these issues.

Unit 5 recently conducted a district-wide demographic study. This study revealed that several schools on the east side—where much of the growth of recent decades occurred—are either at capacity or overcrowded. These include Grove and Towanda Elementary Schools and Normal Community High School. Vacant land in this area continues to be positioned well for new growth, heightening the need for collaboration, particularly on land use issues, in this area.

- **Activity and Recreation Center (ARC):** The ARC center is located at 600 E Willow Street in Normal. It is managed by the Normal Township and primarily caters to residents over 55 years. The ARC includes fitness facilities and other community spaces, and since the opening of its new facility in April 2016, its membership has expanded from under 1,000 to nearly 4,000. Given the popularity and multifunctional nature of this space, it could serve as a valuable community resource even beyond its originally intended uses. Potential partnerships between the Town and the Township could include informational events, transportation programs, Parks and Recreation programming, and more.



Source: NPL



Strategy IP1.7—Ensure that Normal’s Community Facilities Continue to Serve Community Needs as the Town Grows and Develops

IP1.7a—Ensure the Provision of Community Facilities in a Manner Consistent with the Vision and Goals of this Plan [See Community Identity & Public Places Element]

- Facilities intended to serve the entire community—like Town offices and the Normal Public Library—should be located in Uptown, the centrally located and accessible Town Center. Those intended to function at a neighborhood scale—like neighborhood parks and schools—should be distributed equitably.
- Encourage compact and contiguous development patterns that allow for the provision of community facilities, like parks and schools, in an economically and socially responsible fashion.
- Explore funding models that allow the Town to equitably distribute the cost of community facilities. Example: Facilities which contribute to the welfare of all residents can reasonably be provided for through general revenue streams, while more localized facilities, such as parks that support one or two neighborhoods, may be supported by impact fees or Special Assessment Districts.
- Ensure that public facilities are designed and used for multiple purposes. Examples: A residential street becoming a park (“Play Street”) in underserved areas; a storm water detention pond doubling as a park with a trail along its periphery.

IP1.7b—Enhance Inter-Governmental and Regional Coordination in Locating and Sharing Community Facilities

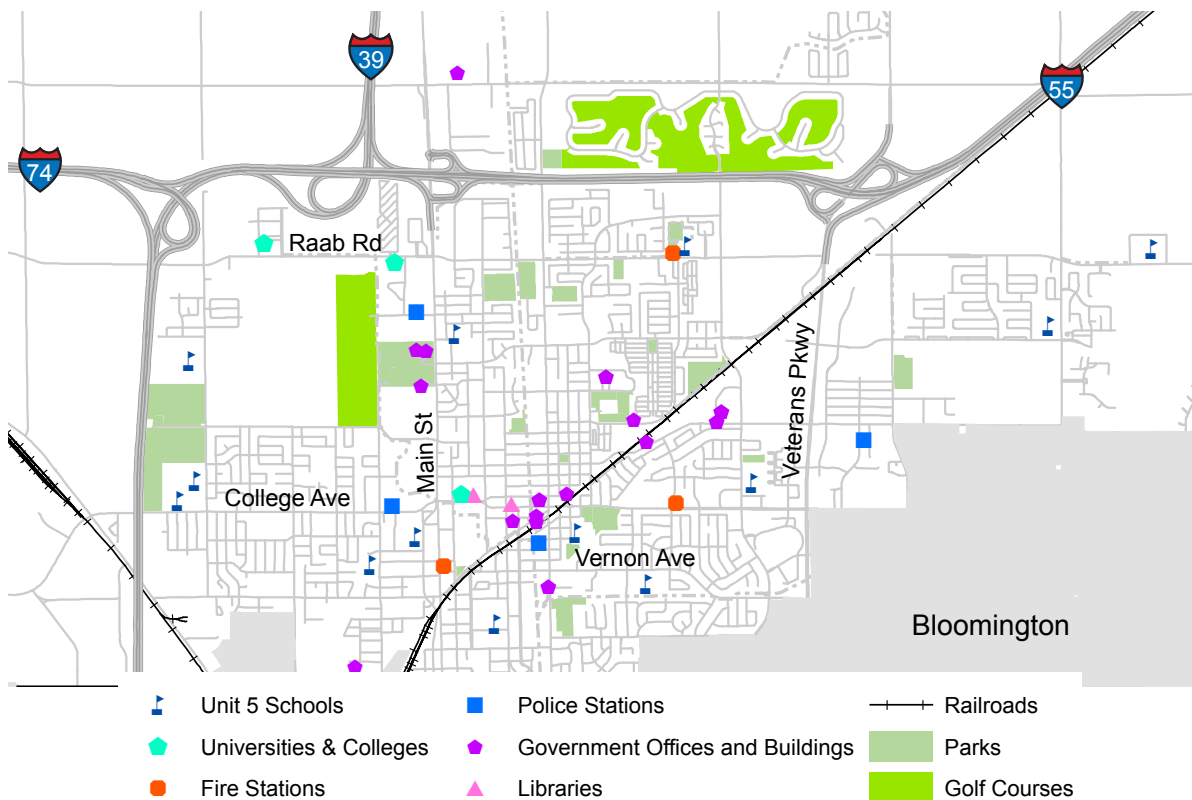
- Co-location of schools and parks has served the community well for many decades. The Town, in cooperation with Unit 5, should continue to explore additional opportunities for facility-sharing or colocation.
- Establish a formal process to ensure adequate input from Unit 5 on land use and development matters. Encourage Unit 5’s staff and board to reciprocate on school siting and improvement issues. The recent conversations about resurrecting a joint Unit 5 school board and Town of Normal joint committee would greatly assist with this process, when it comes to fruition. The regional consistency review process administered by MCRPC and the development review process administered by the Town staff can be the vehicles to formalize this process.
- The Town should continue to explore opportunities to share the services of one of the proposed future fire stations with the City of Bloomington.
- The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to explore opportunities to share facilities and programming with Bloomington Parks and Recreation, Normal Public Library, Normal Township’s Activity and Recreation Center, Illinois State University, Heartland Community College, and other entities when possible.
- The Town should continue to support the Normal Public Library’s efforts to relocate to Uptown South.

IP1.7c—Continue to Locate and Build Public Facilities in a Manner that Raises the Bar for Architectural Distinction, Placemaking, and Energy Efficiency [See CP2.1b for more discussion]

- Strive to build facilities that follow the principles of LEED certification, the Living Communities Challenge, or similar programs.
- Explore alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and geothermal.
- Locate public buildings in a manner that allows them to serve as anchors to Neighborhood Centers or Local Centers, promote mixed use developments, or promote neighborhood redevelopment.

IP1.7d—Continue Implementation of the Facilities and Energy Master Plan and Update It Periodically

MAP IP7: Community Facilities



Solid Waste Management

The Public Works Department manages solid waste disposal services. The Town partners with the Ecology Action Center (EAC), the City of Bloomington, and the County to effectively manage and dispose of solid waste at the regional level. The EAC updates the McLean County Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan every five years. The impending closure of the McLean County Landfill, significant changes in recycling and waste technologies, and a stagnating community-wide recycling rate all contributed to the need for an entirely new 20-year solid waste plan instead of a short-term update. The new plan prioritizes commercial recycling, construction and demolition recycling, multifamily recycling, food waste recycling, a permanent household hazardous waste facility, and increased outreach and technical assistance. [See the *Twenty-Year Materials Recovery and Resource Management Plan for McLean County, Bloomington, and Normal, Illinois* for more information]

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SOURCES

Pay-As-You-Go Financing Cash and Savings	Pay-As-You-Use Financing Debt Financing	Other Financing
Taxation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General Taxes ■ Special Dedicated Taxes User Charges Capital Reserves and Fund Balance Federal Grands and Aid State Grants and Aid Local Option Taxes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sales Taxes ■ Fuel Taxes ■ Income and Payroll Taxes ■ Vehicle Taxes 	Bond Financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ General Obligation Bonds ■ Revenue Bonds ■ Private Activities Bonds ■ Leasing-Revenue Bonds ■ Green Bonds Revolving Loan Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Environmental (State) ■ Transportation (State) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Joint Development of Public Private Partnerships (PPP) ■ Infrastructure Investment Funds ■ Private Non-Profit Philanthropic Partners ■ Crowd Funds

General taxes refer to broad-based taxes on residents and businesses. They consist of sales tax, property tax, and local income or wage taxes and are often used to finance local infrastructure projects that yield community-wide benefits.

Special dedicated taxes are more narrowly-based taxes and are deposited in many local governments' general fund or in special funds to finance local infrastructure.

User charges are fees imposed on local residents and businesses for their use of utilities and other public enterprises. These fees are typically collected into an enterprise fund that funds local infrastructure projects.

Capital reserves hold money saved and accumulated by local governments to be designated to pay for recurring and small capital projects. Under certain circumstances, general fund balances become a source for infrastructure financing.

Federal and state grants and aid programs are available to help fund many local infrastructure needs. These grants have the advantages of sharing the cost of infrastructure projects and enabling local governments to fund capital projects; however, federal and state governments often impose inflexible restrictions on the recipients' use of grants.

- **Transportation grants** can be used for a variety of different projects. Large-scale projects can seek funding from federal grants, such as the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant. Smaller projects, such as work on Town streets, can seek funding under the urban subsection of the Surface Transportation Program. This program can also provide funding for bicycle programs, planning and research, and some categories of bridge funding. Additionally, the Federal Transit Administration provides funding in the form of formula grants for capital and operating costs. Along with the Downstate Operating Assistance Program, transportation such as Connect Transit can receive funding from these options.

General obligation bonds (GO bonds) are the long-term obligations of local governments backed by the issuer's full faith and credit and repaid from general tax revenues. GO bonds are traditionally used to finance projects that do not yield revenues.

Revenue bonds, also referred to as nonguaranteed debt, are typically issued to finance public facilities that have definable users with specific revenue streams. These bonds are secured by the pledge of defined revenue sources generated from the bond-funded projects.

Private activities bonds (PABs) are a type of municipal bond issued by local governments on behalf of a private business to build those projects that benefit private entities but also serve some public purpose.

Leasing-revenue bonds are used to finance local government operational expense through a contractual arrangement between private or nonprofit equipment and facility owners or construction builders which transfers the use and ownership of that equipment and/or facility for a negotiated period of time.

Green bonds are regular bonds but issued to finance specific “green” projects that have significant environmental benefits.

Example: In 2016, New York’s Metropolitan Transportation Authority issued \$500 million in Transportation Revenue Green Bonds for infrastructure renewal and upgrade projects on the New York City Transit.

Local option taxes are new tax options that can be authorized at the state or local level and levied at the county or municipal level for infrastructure-related purposes. Revenues from local option taxes can be earmarked for building special local infrastructure projects. Some forms of these taxes include:

- Local Option Sales Taxes
- Local Option Fuel Taxes
- Local Option Income and Payroll Taxes
- Local Option Vehicle Tax

Example: Like the local option sales tax rate increase approved by both Normal and Bloomington in 2015 for mental health services, many communities are using these options to pay for much needed transportation infrastructure improvements.

Value Capture

■ **Impact Fees** are one-time charges imposed on new businesses or property owners to pay for a share of the costs of new development activities. Improvements must benefit those who pay the fees.

Example: School and parkland impact fees imposed by Normal and Bloomington.

■ **Special Assessment Districts** are formed to include a specific area in which property owners or businesses agree to pay a special property tax assessment to fund a proposed improvement or service from which they expect to benefit.

Example: Kansas City, Missouri, recently established the Downtown Transportation Development District to collect a 1% sales tax on sales within the district. The sales tax revenue will be used to help fund a planned \$102 million streetcar line.

■ **Tax Increment Financing** is a mechanism to capture the new or incremental taxes that are created when underutilized and vacant properties are redeveloped. Future captured revenues can be used to finance the infrastructure improvements.

Joint Development is a formal agreement between local governments and private developers in which private developers contribute some benefits back to local governments or jointly share costs of infrastructure improvement with local governments.

Example: Miami-Dade County in Florida initiated joint development projects with private developers for the Dadeland North Metrorail Station. The agreements were structured in a way that benefited the involved parties in proportion to their stake and risk. One such agreement allows the Miami-Dade County transit agency to receive either \$400,000 or 5% of gross revenues annually from developed commercial projects near the station.

Public-Private Partnerships or joint developments can take many forms:

■ A **Design-Build** arrangement is an instance where a government agency establishes a contract with a private company that assumes the design and construction phases of the infrastructure projects.

■ In a **Design-Build-Operate-Maintain** arrangement, contracted private entities are responsible for project design and construction, as well as operation and maintenance after the project is complete.

■ In a **Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain** arrangement, private entities take the responsibility of fully or partially funding infrastructure projects along with the design and construction phases, operation, and maintenance. Public entities still retain the ownership of the privately built transportation projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING SOURCES *continued*—

State Revolving Loan Funds

- **Environmental State Revolving Funds (SRF)** are state-run entities capitalized by federal funds and state matching funds that offer loans with below-market interest rates to local jurisdictions. Currently there are two types of environmental SRFs, Clean Water State Revolving Funds and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. The Illinois SRF Program identifies the following as eligible projects:
 - new drinking water or wastewater infrastructure construction;
 - upgrading or rehabilitating existing infrastructure;
 - stormwater-related projects that benefit water quality; and
 - a wide-variety of other projects that protect or improve the quality of Illinois's rivers, streams, and lakes.
- **State Infrastructure Banks** offer low-interest loans and non-grant forms of credit enhancement to public and private sponsors of local transportation projects. They are capitalized with seed money from federal transportation aid and state-matching funds. At the time of this writing, the State of Illinois has been investigating this option but has not yet established an Infrastructure Bank. Local governments should advocate for establishing this funding stream.

Infrastructure Investment Funds

An infrastructure investment fund is generally defined as an entity in which large investors pool their financial resources and employ experienced fund managers to invest their fund equity into various kinds of infrastructure assets. Large investors can include:

- Pension Funds
- Sovereign Wealth Funds
- Private Companies (Insurance and Investment Banks)

Example: In 2015, the Dallas, Texas, Police and Fire Pension System had an infrastructure asset allocation of \$197 million that was partly invested in hospital and water treatment plant projects in Asia and also in managed highway lanes in Texas.

Private and Nonprofit Philanthropic Partners

Donations or grants with a charitable purpose can be made to support building or operating local infrastructure. Foundations can also make Program-Related Investments to support local infrastructure. These investments allow the recipient to borrow capital at lower rates, or simply borrow less.

Example: In Detroit, Michigan, a coalition of private-sector philanthropic and business leaders committed \$100 million in 2014 toward building and operating a new streetcar line in the downtown area.

Endnotes

1. USEPA Resources - https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-04/documents/am_tools_guide_may_2014.pdf
2. See Health and Sustainability for more information on Green Infrastructure Solutions
3. The Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) scale is a 1-10 rating system for road pavement condition. Visual inspection is used to evaluate pavement surface conditions. When assessed correctly, PASER ratings provide a basis for comparing the quality of roadway segments.

A photograph of an elderly woman with short grey hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved top and pants, smiling and pushing a man in a wheelchair. The man is wearing a light-colored sweater and pants, and is also smiling. They are outdoors on a paved path with trees in the background. The entire image has a purple tint.

HUMANITARIAN & SOCIAL ASPECTS

“Change does not roll in on
the wheels of inevitability,
but comes through
continuous struggle.”

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Humanitarian & Social Aspects CONTENTS

E5.3	Introduction
E5.5	Goal HSA1: Foster a community-wide culture of openness, empathy, and equitable treatment of all residents.
E5.7	Strategy HSA1.1—Build Awareness, Understanding, and Empathy for People of All Backgrounds, Circumstances, and Abilities
E5.8	Strategy HSA1.2—Foster Informal Multicultural Interactions
E5.9	Strategy HSA1.3—Consider the Needs of All Residents When Designing Public Places and Programming
E5.11	Strategy HSA1.4—Explore Partnership Opportunities with Normal Township
E5.12	Goal HSA2: Implement community-driven policies and processes to achieve equitable outcomes in law enforcement and the legal system.
E5.13	Goal HSA3: Reduce economic inequality and promote opportunity for all residents.
E5.15	Strategy HSA3.1—Reduce Economic Inequality and Promote Opportunity for All Residents





When asked to describe Normal, people who live here tend to paint a very positive picture of this community. Its leaders are forward-thinking. Normal has a strong economy, quality higher education institutions, and cultural amenities, but retains a family-friendly, small-town charm.



The results of the Plan It Normal Survey and stakeholder interviews, each summarized in the *Community Snapshot and Outreach Report*, generally paint a very positive picture of this community.

The challenge for the Town of Normal between now and 2040 is twofold:

1. Ensure that the Town's advantages are accessible to everyone; and
2. Adapt to the anticipated changes in Normal's demographics, social conditions, and economy that are likely to reshape this community.

The social and political context in which this *Plan* was developed highlights the need for local action. As noted in the Introduction and Executive Summary, this document is being written in the midst of a years-long state budget stalemate, part of a broader fiscal crisis that is not likely to end soon. The worst of the impact has been on human service providers that help vulnerable populations—emblematic of the growing inequality that is driving so much of the national and global political discourse. The state's problems, meanwhile, are likely being exacerbated by a tense national climate in which values such as diversity and multiculturalism are being questioned, often in disturbing ways.

In this environment, it is vital that cities be clear about their priorities. The *2040 Vision* recognizes that in order to remain competitive and desirable in an age of increasing diversity and rising inequality, the Town must reaffirm its commitment to the core values of social equity and multiculturalism.

This *Comprehensive Plan* attempts to translate that commitment into policy.

Comprehensive plans typically focus on the more tangible aspects of the urban landscape—infrastructure, land use, the natural environment. Policy changes in these traditional areas have visible, often literally concrete effects. When it comes to social policies, the effects are harder to grasp, especially when the problems they are intended to solve are so rooted in our culture. Culture is difficult to change, but that is what the Vision calls for and what the Town aspires to do: Foster a community culture that more fully meets our ideals of respect, equity, and inclusiveness.

To that end, the Town of Normal can take a number of steps to ensure equal opportunity for all of its residents. It can effect change directly through internal policies, local ordinances, public-private partnerships, and intergovernmental agreements. It can also have a substantial indirect impact through education and advocacy and by facilitating collaboration among third parties

“Sustainability factors” as visualized in the Town’s *Community-Wide Sustainability Plan and 2035 Report*



such as human service nonprofits, higher education institutions, Unit 5 schools, and other local governments.

Given the Town’s longstanding commitment to social equity—as seen in its *Community-Wide Sustainability Plan and 2035 Report*, where “social progress” was described as a key element of sustainability, as well as the 2040 Vision—there is ample reason to believe that the Town can continue to be a positive agent in building a more inclusive and equitable society. This chapter sets forth ambitious goals, but none this community cannot achieve.

Connection to the Vision

Core Value 4: Social Equity. Ours is a compassionate community that strives for social consciousness, responsiveness, and justice.

Core Value 5: Multiculturalism. Ours is an inclusive and welcoming community that celebrates our unique and diverse backgrounds, identities, cultures, and talents.

GOALS

GOAL HSA1: Foster a community-wide culture of openness, empathy, and equitable treatment of all residents.

GOAL HSA2: Implement community-driven policies and processes to achieve equitable outcomes in law enforcement and the legal system.

GOAL HSA3: Reduce economic inequality and promote opportunity for all residents.

GOAL HSA1: Foster a community-wide culture of openness, empathy, and equitable treatment of all residents.

As the Town's 2040 Vision report puts it: "A community full of wonderful amenities means nothing to a resident who does not feel like he or she belongs here, who merely feels tolerated as opposed to valued." The Vision calls for broader and deeper civic engagement; a more equitable and community-based justice system; economic fairness for all; and a multicultural community in which everyone living here feels welcome and included.

To achieve this, Normal will have to be introspective and self-critical about the ways in which it is *not* a community for everyone. It will have to be proactive in addressing deficiencies, both leading by example and facilitating conversations with institutional partners.

Positive Contributors

- Existing knowledge resources
 - Normal Sustainability Plan and 2035 Report
 - United Way McLean County Community Needs Assessment (2014)
 - Community Health Needs Assessment (2016)
 - Plans and reports by East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging (ECIAAAA), Life-CIL, Autism McLean, and other organizations representing seniors and people with disabilities
- Institutional resources
 - Town programs, departments, and policies: Children's Discovery Museum and the Parks and Recreation Department
 - Social service providers and advocacy groups
 - Academic institutions and affiliated programs
 - Intergovernmental partners (City of Bloomington, McLean County, Unit 5)
- Volunteers and philanthropists
- Commitment from Town leaders

Challenges

- Lack of awareness of the magnitude and types of local social issues
- Knowledge and coordination gaps among service providers and advocates
- Resistance to changing the status quo
- State financial crisis resulting in shutting down of social service agencies

Indicators and Metrics

- Diversity on boards, commissions, and Town staff
- Institutional markers of inclusiveness and commitment to social justice
- Resident attitudes measured through surveys
- Civic participation metrics
 - Voting
 - Volunteering
 - Membership in civic groups
- Participation in community programming and events
- Number of events that attract diverse populations

Partners

- Social service agencies and advocacy groups
- Cultural organizations, including organizations representing particular ethnic groups (Conexiones Latinas de McLean County, McLean County India Association, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), etc.)
- Higher education institutions (Illinois State University, Heartland Community College, Lincoln College, Illinois Wesleyan University, University of Illinois Extension)
- Unit 5 schools
- Normal Township
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC)
- Normal Public Library



Strategy HSA1.1—Build Awareness, Understanding, and Empathy for People of All Backgrounds, Circumstances, and Abilities

HSA1.1a Make the Town of Normal Government More Diverse and Inclusive Internally

HSA1.1b Make All Normal Residents Feel Welcome, Not Merely Tolerated

HSA1.1c Continue to Provide Safe Spaces to Hold Forums, Rallies, and Other Citizen-Driven Events that Bring Awareness to Important Social Issues

HSA1.1d Tap into the Skills and Enthusiasm of Normal and BN-Area Volunteers to Advance Civic Causes

Strategy HSA1.2—Foster Informal Multicultural Interactions

HSA1.2a Use Food as an Opportunity to Foster Informal Communications and a Sense of Community

HSA1.2b Promote Kid- and Family-Friendly Activities to Make Culturally Targeted Events Appealing and Fun for Everyone

Strategy HSA1.3—Consider the Needs of All Residents When Designing Public Places and Programming

HSA1.3a Design Public Spaces and Programming for People of All Ages and Abilities

HSA1.3b Continue to Support and Expand Existing Programs that Promote Inclusion and Diversity

Strategy HSA1.4—Explore Partnership Opportunities with Normal Township

HSA1.4a Work with the Township to Explore Partnerships Centered on the Activity and Recreation Center (ARC)

HSA1.4b Coordinate with Township Staff to Understand and Address Issues Faced by Seniors and Low-Income Populations

HSA1.4c Help Market the Township's Services and Collaborate to Improve Accessibility

Strategy HSA1.1—Build Awareness, Understanding, and Empathy for People of All Backgrounds, Circumstances, and Abilities

HSA1.1a—Make the Town of Normal Government More Diverse and Inclusive Internally

- Place a greater emphasis on diverse representation (in terms of demographics and diversity of thought and experience) among the Town’s staff and on boards and commissions. Strive for diversity of race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability level, and socioeconomic status.
- Use poverty simulations and other educational tools to regularly train Town staff, public officials, and members of the public to better understand poverty and related issues. (Q)
- Use third-party metrics, certifications, and other analytical tools to evaluate the degree to which the Town of Normal’s own internal practices promote diversity and inclusion. Example: JUST certification

HSA1.1b—Make All Normal Residents Feel Welcome, Not Merely Tolerated

- Engage residents using a variety of messaging and distribution methods.
- Audit programming in Town Parks, the Children’s Discovery Museum, and other departments through the lenses of different demographic groups, different physical and cognitive abilities, and affordability. (Q)

HSA1.1c—Continue to Provide Safe Public Spaces to Hold Forums, Rallies, and Other Citizen-Driven Events that Bring Awareness to Important Social Issues

There are a number of town-owned and -operated facilities that could serve this function, including various Parks and Recreation facilities and a number of public facilities in Uptown Normal (particularly Uptown Circle). Advisory group members also pointed to the Library as a model for success, as it has proved a popular and welcoming place for community members of all backgrounds. Illinois State University (ISU) and Unit 5 also have a history of working with the Town to provide spaces.

HSA1.1d—Tap into the Skills and Enthusiasm of Normal and BN-Area Volunteers to Advance Civic Causes

Strategy HSA1.2—Foster Informal Multicultural Interactions

HSA1.2a—Use Food as an Opportunity to Foster Informal Communications and a Sense of Community

Traditional foods are a common thread among people of all nationalities and regions. The thoughtful inclusion of food at public events and gatherings is a way to make diverse people feel comfortable and welcome. Community gardens can also serve this purpose, as they bring together a variety of food-growing techniques and preferred food varieties.

HSA1.2b—Promote Kid- and Family-Friendly Activities to Make Culturally Targeted Events Appealing and Fun for Everyone (Q)



Bloomington-Normal Kite Festival

The kite festival is planned by and mostly attracts members of Bloomington-Normal’s Indian community. This is a very child- and family-friendly activity that has the potential to be more of a multicultural event if promoted and marketed more broadly by the Town.

Illinois State University Human Library

ISU’s Human Library is part of the University College program, which primarily serves to help first-year and transfer students navigate their college transitions. The “Books” meet with students in person to share their experiences with adversity,

whether through unlucky circumstances, illness, prejudice, etc. The Town could support and promote ISU’s program, or adopt their own version. The Normal Public Library, for instance, would be a natural fit.

Taste of the West in West Bloomington

Taste of the West is an annual event on Bloomington’s West Side in which West Side restaurants and other businesses provide free or pay-what-you-can food tastings to the general public. It helps build community spirit, celebrate local food from different cultures, promote neighborhood entrepreneurs, and raise money for local charitable causes.

Strategy HSA1.3—Consider the Needs of All Residents When Designing Public Places and Programming

HSA1.3a—Design Public Spaces and Programming for People of All Ages and Abilities

- Seek to go beyond the already-mandated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards for public spaces and incorporate universal design standards that better serve populations with issues pertaining to autism and other spectrum disorders.
- Consider officially reviewing, and placing on file documents such as the *Autism McLean Whitepaper*¹ that provide guidance on how to design public spaces for traditionally underserved populations. Use such documents to shape the Town's own guidelines.

HSA1.3b—Continue to Support and Expand Existing Programs that Promote Inclusion and Diversity

Local examples of such programs include:

- The Normal Public Library's Autism Café
- Multicultural exhibits at the Children's Discovery Museum

Building an Autism-Friendly Community

Autism McLean is a local nonprofit organization, one of several that provide educational, recreational, and financial resources for people with autism spectrum disorders in McLean County. In 2016, Autism McLean published a whitepaper entitled *Building an Autism Friendly Community in McLean County*. The whitepaper describes six lifelong needs of people with autism, inventories existing opportunities to fulfill those needs within McLean County, and identifies gaps to be addressed. The six needs and focus areas were framed as follows²:

Welcome me: Expanding awareness, informed service, social supports, and civic engagement opportunities for people with autism

Learn with me: Creating educational opportunities for people with autism

Home and transit for me: Ensuring appropriate housing and transportation for people with autism

Wellness for me: Ensuring healthcare and wellness opportunities for people with autism

Work with me: Employing people with autism

Play with me: Creating recreation and leisure opportunities for people with autism

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that Autism affects 1 in 68 American children.³ The whitepaper should also serve as a model for other advocacy groups that aim to increase awareness of important social issues and achieve significant policy changes.



Source: <http://wglt.org/post/celebrating-success-becoming-autism-friendly-community#stream/0>

Normal Public Library

Like most public libraries, the Normal Public Library (NPL) is a multifaceted community resource, serving as a meeting and event space, connecting patrons to vital services, and providing access to technology and lifelong learning opportunities. As one of the most frequented and appreciated public places in Normal, the NPL has a wealth of experience in serving a diverse population, and over the course of the planning process, the NPL was frequently identified as a model for inclusive outreach and programming.

The NPL is currently in the early stages of planning a new, larger facility in Uptown Normal, with the majority of the discussion centering on a proposal to make it an anchor of the “Uptown South” development across the tracks from Uptown Station. If these plans come to fruition, the new facility will have even greater potential to serve as a community resource.



Architect's rendering of proposed new library in Uptown South

Strategy HSA1.4—Explore Partnership Opportunities with Normal Township

HSA1.4a—Work with the Township to Explore Partnerships Centered on the Activity and Recreation Center (ARC)

HSA1.4b—Coordinate with Township Staff to Understand and Address Issues Faced by Seniors and Low-Income Populations

- Work with the Township to ensure that Town leaders and staff understand the issues facing Township clientele, particularly low-income individuals and the senior population. These issues can in many cases be generalized to underserved populations throughout Normal.
- Expand the sharing of data and resources with the Township and vice versa.

HSA1.4c—Help Market the Township’s Services and Collaborate to Improve Accessibility

Normal Township

Normal Township is a separate unit of government whose boundaries encompass a portion of the Town of Normal and some parts of rural McLean County. The Town of Normal makes up roughly half of the Township’s land area and over 99% of its population, according to the 2010 Census. Within that service area, the Township is responsible for property assessments; maintenance of a small subset of roads; and certain social services, including senior programs, general and emergency financial assistance for people in need, vouchers for health care and dental treatment, and other programs.⁴



Fitness program in the Activity and Recreation Center
Image source: <https://www.activityandrecreationcenter.org>

Goal HSA2: Implement community-driven policies and processes to achieve equitable outcomes in law enforcement and the legal system.

Persistent institutional racism and injustice in law enforcement, the legal system, education, and other institutions have sparked a new national civil rights movement—and a backlash to that movement—in the years leading up to the development of this *Plan*. While Bloomington-Normal has not seen the violence, or even mass protests, that other cities around the country have seen, local news coverage and the work of community advocates have exposed a degree of tension that has likely surprised some residents and leaders of our community.

Acknowledging this tension presents an opportunity to be proactive – to take stock of how the justice system works in Normal and improve outcomes for residents who currently feel marginalized, before a tragedy forces the matter as it has in other communities. During the 2040 visioning process, the Vision Committee spent a great deal of time discussing this issue. In order to continue the conversation on race and law enforcement, a smaller subset of the Vision Committee continued to meet after the *Vision Plan* was presented to the Town Council in late 2016. This group presented its report and recommendations to the Town Council in August of 2017. This report is included in the Appendix.

GOAL HSA3: Reduce economic inequality and promote opportunity for all residents.

Steadily rising economic inequality, globalization, urbanization, automation, and the disappearance of blue-collar jobs have made the phrase “21st century economy” a source of uncertainty and anxiety for many people. Until now, these trends appear to have resulted in gains for already-advantaged groups, while disadvantaged groups have stagnated or seen their fortunes decline. If Normal in 2040 is to look like the community described in the *2040 Vision Report*, Normal will have to do better by these groups who are being left behind.

A greater commitment to attracting and retaining blue-collar jobs; workforce development initiatives to help close skill gaps; and a proactive approach to leveling the playing field should be hallmarks of economic development in Normal 2040. In many cases, the Town itself will not have direct or full control over whether these objectives are achieved, though it can lead by example to some degree through internal policies. Achieving this goal will require the Town to build (or extend) partnerships with local business leaders, educational institutions, social service agencies, and other organizations with a commitment to growing a vibrant and fair local economy.

Positive Contributors

- Town’s demonstrated commitment to social progress
- Social service providers
- Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) obligations of financial institutions
- Regional workforce investment authorities under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Challenges

- Persistent and growing economic inequality
- Indicators and metrics
- Percentage living in poverty
- Labor force participation trends and unemployment (including for people from disadvantaged populations)

■ Small business statistics

- Number and percentage of businesses that are owned by minorities, women, or members of other underserved groups
- Impact of economic development efforts
 - Dollar amounts of grants and loans made to local businesses, particularly MBE/WBE/DBEs

■ Economic impact of local hire policies

- Extent to which human service providers continue to exist

Indicators and Metrics

- GINI Index
- # of residents Below Poverty Level (BPL)
- Cost of Living Index
- Median earnings for people without an Associate Degree or High School Diploma

Partners

- Normal Township
- Area Social Service Agencies [*See Appendix for a list of partner agencies and organizations marked with an asterisk * .*]
- Economic Development Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- MCRPC
- Area higher education institutions
- Illinois State University’s Stevenson Center
- Small Business Development Center
- Heartland Community College’s Workforce Development Center (WDC)
- University of Illinois Extension’s Unity Community Center
- Unit 5 and District 87’s Bloomington Area Career Center



Strategy HSA3.1—Reduce Economic Inequality and Promote Opportunity for All Residents

- HSA3.1a Explore the Possibility of Creating of an Economic Development District (EDD)
- HSA3.1b Expand Workforce Development Efforts
- HSA3.1c Increase Support for Local Businesses Owned by Minorities, Women, People with Disabilities, and Other Economically Disadvantaged Populations
- HSA3.1d Support Public and Private Human Service Providers in Bloomington-Normal
- HSA3.1e Take Advantage of Technology to Grow as a Compassionate City
- HSA3.1f Through Land Use and Neighborhood Planning, Support Unit 5 in its Efforts to Equitably Educate All of its Students
- HSA3.1g Increase the Supply of Affordable and Supportive Housing in Normal
- HSA3.1h Ensure that All Residents Have Access to Adequate and Affordable Transportation Options

Courtesy BN Advantage

Strategy HSA3.1—Reduce Economic Inequality and Promote Opportunity for All Residents

Reducing economic inequality requires that economic development efforts be focused on leveling the playing field and improving opportunities for those who are currently being left behind. As Normal's population ages and becomes more diverse, and as technological progress continues to reshape the employment landscape through automation and the obsolescence of many types of routine-based jobs, it will be necessary to devote more community resources to economic development. Focusing more attention on workforce development; providing support and outreach for underserved populations; and facilitating the growth of a business community that provides equal opportunities for everyone are all vital measures to ensure that the economic disruptions we know are coming have a net positive effect on our economy.

HSA3.1a—Explore the Possibility of Creating an Economic Development District (EDD)

An Economic Development District (EDD) is a federally designated district through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and is charged with economic development efforts focused on underserved populations. An EDD designation would avail the community of federal financial resources for economic development initiatives targeting people most in need. The Town should partner with City of Bloomington, the McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC), the Economic Development Center (EDC), and other stakeholders to create an EDD in the region. (Q)

HSA3.1b—Expand Workforce Development Efforts

- Ensure that existing programs and initiatives are fully utilized.
 - Coordinate efforts with the BN Advantage Workforce Task Force to ensure they take into account the needs of disadvantaged populations.
- Work with economic development professionals, employers, and educational institutions to identify skill gaps between local employers' needs and available workers' skillsets. Use this information to drive workforce development decision-making.
- Work with employers seeking specific skillsets to provide training programs for local job seekers. Focus particularly on technical education for disadvantaged youth and the long-term unemployed and underemployed.
 - Work with Heartland Community College, particularly through the Work Force Development Center (WDC), to identify potential workers and develop customized training programs.
 - Work with Unit 5 to ensure that students are aware of trade apprenticeship programs.
- Investigate local hiring policies.
 - Local hiring policies require that a certain percentage of employees or work-hours in large public projects be reserved for local residents. The purpose is to ensure that the costs of development are balanced by benefits to local workers, which has beneficial ripple effects throughout the entire local economy.
- Explore opportunities to reduce unemployment and underemployment among people with disabilities.

HSA3.1c—Increase Support for Local Businesses Owned by Minorities, Women, People with Disabilities, and Other Economically Disadvantaged Populations

- Ensure that these minority-owned, women-owned, and disadvantaged business enterprises (MBE, WBE, DBE) have equal opportunities to obtain Town contracts. The Town has a local purchasing policy and a green purchasing policy that can be further extended to include businesses owned by members of disadvantaged communities.
- Maintain a comprehensive database of MBE/WBE/DBE businesses. Track progress and survey them periodically to understand their challenges and needs. (Q)
- Partner with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) to create targeted small business loans. *[See also Funding Strategies section.]*

HSA3.1d—Support Public and Private Human Service Providers in Bloomington-Normal

The Town can support social service providers by facilitating intergovernmental and interagency coordination, raising awareness of existing services, and speaking with one voice, both at federal and at state levels, in support of funding for local nonprofit agencies

HSA3.1e—Take Advantage of Technology to Grow as a Compassionate City

The Smart Cities Council (SCC) maintains an evolving toolkit of information on how cities can use new technology and Smart City concepts to address social problems—what they call being a “Compassionate City.”⁵ The SCC highlights innovative ideas and gathers case studies showing how cities can more effectively document and analyze social disparities, connect residents to social services, break down the “digital divide,” etc. The Town should keep abreast of these and similar innovations and take advantage of them when feasible.

[See the Economic Vitality Element for more information about Smart Cities.]

HSA3.1f—Through Land Use and Neighborhood Planning, Support Unit 5 in its Efforts to Equitably Educate All of its Students.

- Establish the impacts of sprawling development patterns on its students, and use this information to make better development decisions in the future. For example, a school location without easy access to alternative transportation (walking, bicycling, or transit) can limit students’ ability to participate in extracurricular activities, which in turn can impact their school performance.
- Work with Unit 5 officials to identify particular neighborhoods with housing, safety, transportation, or other issues that may be holding students back and contributing to achievement gaps. Develop strategies to address these issues, in coordination with Unit 5 and other relevant institutional partners.

HSA3.1g—Increase the Supply of and Access to Affordable and Supportive Housing in Normal

Bloomington-Normal’s housing market is affordable for most residents, but there are significant gaps that need to be addressed. Particular needs include:

- Affordable housing for people with low to moderate incomes
- Supportive housing for homeless people, people with disabilities, and other groups for whom it can be difficult to find and maintain homes.
- Increased support for “aging in place.” As the community ages, it will become increasingly important to remove barriers that prevent seniors from staying in their homes.

[See the Housing Element for more information.]

HSA3.1h—Ensure that All Residents Have Access to Adequate and Affordable Transportation Options

Having an efficient, affordable, multimodal transportation network is essential for the economic well-being of Normal’s residents. Not all residents can afford to purchase, maintain, or fuel a car and would be better off financially walking, biking, or taking the bus. Currently (and historically), Normal’s transportation system is weighted heavily toward the use of automobiles, with insufficient support for other modes of transportation.

[See the Planning Framework Section and Health & Sustainability Element, as well as the most recent Long-Range Transportation Plan, for relevant recommendations]



Courtesy BN Advantage

Funding: Strategies and Partners

Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs)

As defined by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's CDFI Fund:

“Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) share a common goal of expanding economic opportunity in low-income communities by providing access to financial products and services for local residents and businesses. . . . CDFIs can be banks, credit unions, loan funds, microloan funds, or venture capital providers.”⁶

Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Compliance

According to the Federal Reserve: “The Community Reinvestment Act is intended to encourage depository institutions to help meet the credit needs of the communities in which they operate, including low- and moderate-income (LMI) neighborhoods, consistent with safe and sound operations.”⁷ Financial institutions are incentivized under the CRA to invest in community development initiatives, including affordable housing, community services aimed at LMI individuals, economic development for small businesses and small farms, and neighborhood revitalization and stabilization.⁸ Financial institutions are often therefore good funding partners for socially beneficial initiatives.

Credit-Building and Micro-Lending

One of the primary barriers faced by low-income people is a lack of access to credit. Poor access to credit prevents people from accumulating assets and leads them to seek credit through potentially unsafe channels such as payday loan providers. Alternatives exist in the form of nonprofits that help people build credit and provide microfinancing for small businesses that otherwise lack credit access. Consider partnering with such organizations (some of which are CDFIs—see Community Development Financial Institutions above) to help Normal's low-income residents.

Example: Justine PETERSEN Housing and Reinvestment Corporation

Justine PETERSEN, a St. Louis-based nonprofit, offers a credit-building service for its low-to-moderate income clients, makes small business micro-loans, and provides assistance to first-time homebuyers. Its mission is “to connect institutional resources with the needs of low- to moderate-income families and individuals in order to build assets and create enduring change.” It has served clients in 14 states, including Illinois.⁹

Federal Workforce Investment Funding

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 is a federal law that provides funding and an organizing framework for a number of state, regional, and local workforce investment programs. As summarized by the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOLETA), the WIOA “supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education

and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.” It “is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.”¹⁰

The WIOA was identified by advisory group stakeholders as an area of opportunity that is currently being taken advantage of in other central Illinois communities.

Pay for Success Bonds

Per the Nonprofit Finance Fund:

Pay for Success (PFS) is an approach to contracting that ties payment for service delivery to the achievement of measurable outcomes. The movement towards PFS contracting is a means of ensuring that high-quality, effective social services are working for individuals and communities.

Traditionally, contracts or grants to support social service delivery are based on the volume of services delivered (e.g., number of students taught in a job training program) or short-term outputs (e.g., number of people who graduated from the job training program). An outcome is a longer-term (and hopefully positive) change; for example, a job training participant who finds and keeps a job, and experiences an increase in earnings.

In a PFS contract, the payor for outcomes—typically, but not exclusively, government—agrees to provide funding if and when the services delivered achieve a pre-agreed-upon result. Typically, an independent evaluator determines whether the agreed-upon outcomes have been met.

PFS contracting has been used to scale up effective programs and interventions, as well as test innovative models of service delivery. Since the payor is not committed to paying for services if they do not achieve the desired outcomes, PFS can be particularly attractive to governments as a way to realize greater accountability and efficiency by allocating resources to programs with demonstrable outcomes.¹¹

Raising or Reallocating Revenue from Traditional Sources

The most straightforward (though not necessarily easiest or most popular) funding method is to raise local taxes. Political considerations and affordability concerns are limiting factors, but given declining federal and state investment in social programs, increasing local revenues is sometimes the only way to provide necessary services. A recent example: In 2016, the Town implemented a 1% percent sales tax increase, in tandem with the City of Bloomington, of which a quarter was dedicated to improving access to mental health care.

Endnotes

- 1 https://autismmclean.org/files/afc_whitepaper_12-12-16.pdf
- 2 https://autismmclean.org/files/afc_whitepaper_12-12-16.pdf
- 3 <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/prevalence>
- 4 <http://www.normaltownship.org>
- 5 <http://smartcitiescouncil.com/compassionate-cities/resources/compassionate-cities>
- 6 https://www.cdfifund.gov/Documents/CDFI_infographic_v08A.pdf
- 7 https://www.federalreserve.gov/consumerscommunities/cra_about.htm
- 8 <https://www.statefarm.com/about-us/community/community-outreach/reinvestment>
- 9 http://www.justinpetersen.org/support_us/annual_report
- 10 <https://www.doleta.gov/wioa/Overview.cfm>
- 11 <http://www.payforsuccess.org/learn/basics>



An aerial photograph of a university campus, overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The image shows a large, multi-story brick building on the right, a wide pedestrian walkway in the center, and a large green lawn on the left. Numerous people are seen walking across the campus. In the foreground, a concrete ledge or wall features the text "FOUNDED 1857" and "ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY". The overall scene is a busy, active university environment.

TOWN AND GOWN

“One of the best things about the Town of Normal is that it is home to Illinois State University.”

—Normal Mayor Chris Koos

“One of the best things about Illinois State University is its location in Normal.”

—Dr. Larry Dietz, ISU President

Town & Gown CONTENTS

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Courtesy Heartland Community College and Illinois State University



Courtesy Illinois State University

Normal is a college town. Since the establishment of the Illinois State Normal University (now Illinois State University) in 1857 in the village of North Bloomington, Normal’s growth and development have been inextricably linked with that of the University. Today, higher education—not only Illinois State, but Heartland Community College and Lincoln College—remains central to Normal’s success.

Higher education institutions shape Normal’s economy and culture in myriad ways, both direct and indirect. Between Illinois State University (ISU), Heartland Community College (HCC, or Heartland), Lincoln College, and Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU) (the latter just over the border in Bloomington), over half of Normal’s population is enrolled or employed at a local institute of higher education. Beyond this direct impact, Normal’s economic advantages—a young, well-educated population, good schools, plenty of things to do, and a strong quality of place—can be attributed to a great extent to the higher education presence. These institutions, in turn, benefit from their location in a community with a long track record of growth and prosperity. Normal and the greater Bloomington-Normal (B-N) region have repeatedly been ranked highly on lists of America’s best college towns, best small cities, and best places for young professionals. The desirability of the Town and the community as a whole is as much an advantage for the local colleges and universities as it is for the rest of the Town.

This mutually beneficial relationship naturally inspires collaboration. Normal and its higher education institutions have a long history of working together, both through standing institutional partnerships—e.g., workforce development efforts, cooperation between ISU and Town of Normal Police, the Neighborhood Action Team (NAT), and more—and through ad hoc arrangements leveraging specific resources in pursuit of common objectives —internships, service learning, research and data analysis by faculty to support community initiatives, and so forth.

These partnerships have been a great asset to both parties. Today they are arguably more vital than ever, as demographic, political, and economic trends are making both governments and the higher education industry rethink how they do business. Town & Gown can and should expand their coordinated efforts. This plan calls for enhanced policy- and staff-level cooperation with respect to workforce and economic development, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship, and improving community engagement on Town-Gown issues.

There are also abundant opportunities for coordination in land use planning and development between the Town and ISU. Geographically, these opportunities are generally clustered in the area in and around ISU’s campus—discussed here as the University Influence Zone (UIZ)—where the University has its greatest impact on land use. The UIZ, defined for the first time in this plan, encompasses ISU’s core campus; the portion of the Main Street corridor that runs along the core campus; the University’s other in-Town properties; and two campus-adjacent neighborhoods, termed the University Influence Neighborhoods (UIN 1 and UIN2). The UIZ has a great deal of untapped potential to harness the energy the University brings. The Town and ISU should work together in the UIZ to enhance the public realm, promote smart growth, and dense development, and strike a balance between supporting the student population and protecting the character of the neighborhoods surrounding campus.

Between now and 2040, Normal should continue to build on its status as one of the best college towns in America.

Existing Town-Gown Partnerships

The Town of Normal and Illinois State University have implemented a number of programs and partnerships to reach out to the student community. A few of these are listed below.¹

- Bloomington-Normal Campus Community Coalition
- CommUniversity Tailgate
- Constitution Trail Signage on Campus
- Emergency Operations Center
- Hancock Stadium Scoreboard
- Homecoming Lighting Ceremony
- Homecoming Parade
- I Am Normal
- IHSA Bidding
- Internships
- ISU Move In
- Land Swaps
- Main Street Beautification
- Neighborhood Action Team
- Neighborhood Association Involvement
- Normal Theater as a Classroom
- Off-Campus Welcome Back
- Plan It Normal
- Police Presentations
- President Dietz’s Points of Pride
- Redbird Mondays
- Redbird Pride Committee
- Redbird Street Signs
- Town & Gown 5K & 1 Mile Walk/Run
- Town Council Meeting on Campus
- Town Gown Golf Outing
- Town Meet & Greet
- University Galleries
- Up Late @ State Events In Uptown
- Uptown Crossing Multi-Use Building
- Water Tower Painting

Connection to the Vision

Core Value 6: Lifelong Learning. Ours is an engaged and inquisitive community that encourages growth and supports lifelong learning.

GOALS

GOAL TG1: Increase collaborations among higher education institutions, the Town of Normal, students, and the broader community.

GOAL TG2: Develop a coordinated approach to planning and development that will respond to the unique needs of the geographic area surrounding the Illinois State University campus.



Courtesy Heartland Community College

Goal TG1: Increase collaboration among higher education institutions, the Town of Normal, students, and the broader community.

In the past, town-gown collaborations have by necessity focused largely on reacting to student-resident conflicts. In light of ongoing and anticipated changes in technology and the economy that will challenge the resiliency of both higher education institutions and municipalities, there is a heightened need for mutually beneficial partnerships. It is important to build on an already strong foundation by enhancing communications, exchanging knowledge and resources, developing coordinated land use strategies, and adopting sustainable practices.

ISU, HCC, and the Town are all actively engaged in BN Advantage [See *Economic Vitality Element*], the regional economic development initiative, at both the leadership as well as the task force levels. In the interest of not being redundant, this chapter does not go into extensive detail on BN Advantage. Rather, it focuses on collaborations between the higher education institutions and the Town.

Positive Contributors

- Longstanding partnerships between the Town, ISU, Heartland, and IWU
- BN Advantage
- Campus Compact and its goals
- ISU's intent to pursue Community Engagement Elective Classification through Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
- ISU's newest department Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL)
- ISU Innovation Assets
- Heartland Innovation Assets
- Council and ISU students meet and greet events
- Neighborhood Action Team (NAT)

Challenges

- Capacity limitations (financial and personnel)
- Lack of awareness of existing assets among the broader community members
- Bureaucracy

Partner Agencies

- Illinois State University
- Heartland Community College
- Lincoln College
- Illinois Wesleyan University
- BN Advantage Leadership Council

Metrics

- Number and scale of collaborative projects
- Student retention after graduation

Strategy TG1.1—Increase Policy-Level Collaborations

- TG1.1a Continue to Collaborate on Workforce and Regional Economic Development Efforts
- TG1.1b Coordinate the Development of Land and Facilities for Effective Integration with Broader Community Goals
- TG1.1c Work Together as Drivers of Innovation
- TG1.1d Support ISU and Heartland in Obtaining the Community Engagement Classification

Strategy TG1.2—Enhance Staff-Level Collaboration

- TG1.2a Support ITGA Certification

Strategy TG1.3—Improve Communication Channels Among Higher Education Institutions, Students, and the Broader Community



Courtesy Illinois State University

Strategy TG1.1—Increase Policy-Level Collaborations

To fully leverage assets, best manage their role, and improve their competitive positions, higher-education leaders and local community leaders need to communicate constantly and collaborate at the policy level to bring about positive change.

TG1.1a—Continue to Collaborate on Workforce and Regional Economic Development Efforts

Central Illinois Regional Broadband (CIRBN) is a recent example of how such collaborations between higher education institutions and the broader community resulted in a robust broadband network in the community. Area higher-education institutions are integrally involved in BN Advantage and other economic development efforts. This involvement is also critical to keeping higher-education institutions nimble in aligning training and resources to the community’s workforce needs.

TG1.1b—Coordinate the Development of Land and Facilities for Effective Integration with Broader Community Goals

- a. **Vacant land:** ISU owns a significant amount of vacant land in the heart of the Town (examples: Gregory Street property and Shelbourne property). Given their central location, these properties offer unique development opportunities with a significant impact on the entire community.
- b. **Parking lots:** ISU owns and operates several surface parking lots. As trends in transportation change from single-occupancy vehicles to multi-modal, ride sharing, and autonomous vehicles, these parking lots have the potential to become valuable real estate for future development.

TG1.1c—Work Together as Drivers of Innovation

The knowledge and research capacity of our area colleges and universities is not fully known or used in the community. As the major university in the area, ISU could assume a leadership role in promoting entrepreneurship and innovation in the Town. Heartland Community College can be another driver of innovation. The “Economic Vitality” chapter outlines several opportunities to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the community.

[See Action EV1.4c on how ISU can be the knowledge partner to drive innovation in the Innovation District.]

TG1.1d—Support ISU and Heartland in Obtaining the Community Engagement Classification (Q)

Offered by the Carnegie Foundation, the Community Engagement Classification recognizes institutions of higher education for their efforts in collaborating with their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global). The purpose of this community engagement is the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens;

strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good.

The Community Engagement Classification is based on voluntary participation by institutions. Applying for the classification involves data collection and documentation of important aspects of institutional mission, identity, and commitments, and requires substantial effort invested by participating institutions. It is an institutional classification; it is not for systems of multiple campuses or for part of an individual campus. The classification is not an award. It is an evidence-based documentation of institutional practice to be used in a process of self-assessment and quality improvement. The documentation is reviewed to determine whether the institution qualifies for recognition.²

At time of writing, ISU indicated its intent to work towards pursuing this classification when it is offered next in 2020.

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL) was established to further strengthen Illinois State University's commitment to its core value of civic engagement. The scope of the work of the Center is broad and includes advancing in-class and out-of-class learning and experiences in partnership with the community. The Center serves as the central repository and clearinghouse for the campus regarding civic engagement data and activities, acquires and distributes grants and grant information related to civic engagement, and provides administrative support for the campus' American Democracy Project and Civic Engagement and Responsibility minor. The Center supports existing campus service learning, civic learning, and political engagement programs, and creates and coordinates additional programming. The Center serves as a point of contact for faculty, staff, students, and community organizations interested in learning more about the campus' community engagement initiatives. CESL is the lead department on campus in pursuit of the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification.



Strategy TG1.2—Enhance Staff-Level Collaboration

To increase the capacity of various departments both at the Town of Normal and within the various higher-education institutions, greater collaboration and openness is necessary across all departments both within and across these entities. More effective communication at the staff level can lead to better flow of data and service provision to the community as a whole.

TG1.2a—Support ITGA Certification (Q)

The International Town & Gown Association (ITGA)³ offers two levels of certification at their annual conference. The certification courses are geared toward helping all stakeholders to understand and address complex challenges and processes associated with municipal and university relationships and to identify, foster, and promote the skills necessary for the effective development of collaborative partnerships and alliances throughout college towns. Appropriate Town and University staff should pursue these certifications.



Courtesy Heartland Community College

Strategy TG1.3—Improve Communication Channels Among Higher Education Institutions, Students, and the Broader Community

Improved communication can help ensure that Town-Gown initiatives garner the attention and support that they need to succeed. We live in an information-saturated environment, so it is more important than ever that communication and marketing strategies incorporate the latest trends and effectively address an increasingly diverse audience. Much of the communication will be aimed at pushing helpful information out to the public, such as upcoming events and cultural opportunities. In addition, behind-the-scenes communication channels for staff also need to be maintained for public safety issues and technical discussions.

- Consider expanding NAT's role to include engagement and marketing.

Neighborhood Action Team (NAT)

In the 1980s, representatives from Illinois State University (ISU) and the Town of Normal established the Neighborhood Action Team (NAT) to better manage student and resident interactions. Current members from ISU include: University Housing, Greek Life, Off-Campus Services, and Student Conduct. Current members from the Town of Normal include: Administrative Offices, Police Department, Legal Department, Inspections Department, and Communications Department. NAT meets monthly to address behavioral issues of students, advance neighborhood relations, and ensure safety and quality of life for both students and residents. With a strategy that places strong emphasis on positive student engagement, this group has been at the forefront of efforts to improve Town-Gown relations in our community.

Overall program accomplishments:

- Constant communication with surrounding neighborhoods
- Interventions for off-campus behavioral issues, particularly having a Code of Conduct that reaches beyond campus
- Pro-active large party intervention
- Community engagement activities
- Annual inspections of all rental properties—resource for tenants and landlords
- Neighborhood aesthetics
- Ongoing landlord communication

Since August 2013 there has been:

- Minimal recidivism in same academic year
- Positive feedback from students
- Opportunity for dialogue between students, ISU, and the Town



Goal TG2: Develop a coordinated approach to planning and development that will respond to the unique needs of the geographic area surrounding the Illinois State University (ISU) campus.

One of the key objectives of collaboration between the Town and ISU is to foster a unique and appealing sense of place. In a digitally connected world where students can live anywhere and attend college remotely, an engaging community will help attract students to ISU and retain them after they graduate.

Some of the richest opportunities for collaboration—as well as some of the biggest challenges—can be found in the zone where the University meets, and has the greatest influence on, the rest of the Town. With on-campus student housing available for only 6,000 students, most students live off campus. This integration of the student population with “townies” creates a unique community where school spirit is apparent in almost all facets of daily life, but lifestyle differences between the student and nonstudent households can cause tension in these neighborhoods. The concept of the UIZ, shown in Map 1, is introduced for the first time in this Comprehensive Plan to begin to address these opportunities and challenges effectively.

Positive contributors

- Neighborhood Action Team (NAT)
- ISU Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CESL)
- ISU’s Campus Compact efforts
- Uptown 2.0
- Increased staff-level interactions between the ISU and Town staffers
- Cooperative apartment managers

Challenges

- Lack of community knowledge of NAT and its role
- State fiscal issues and regulatory barriers

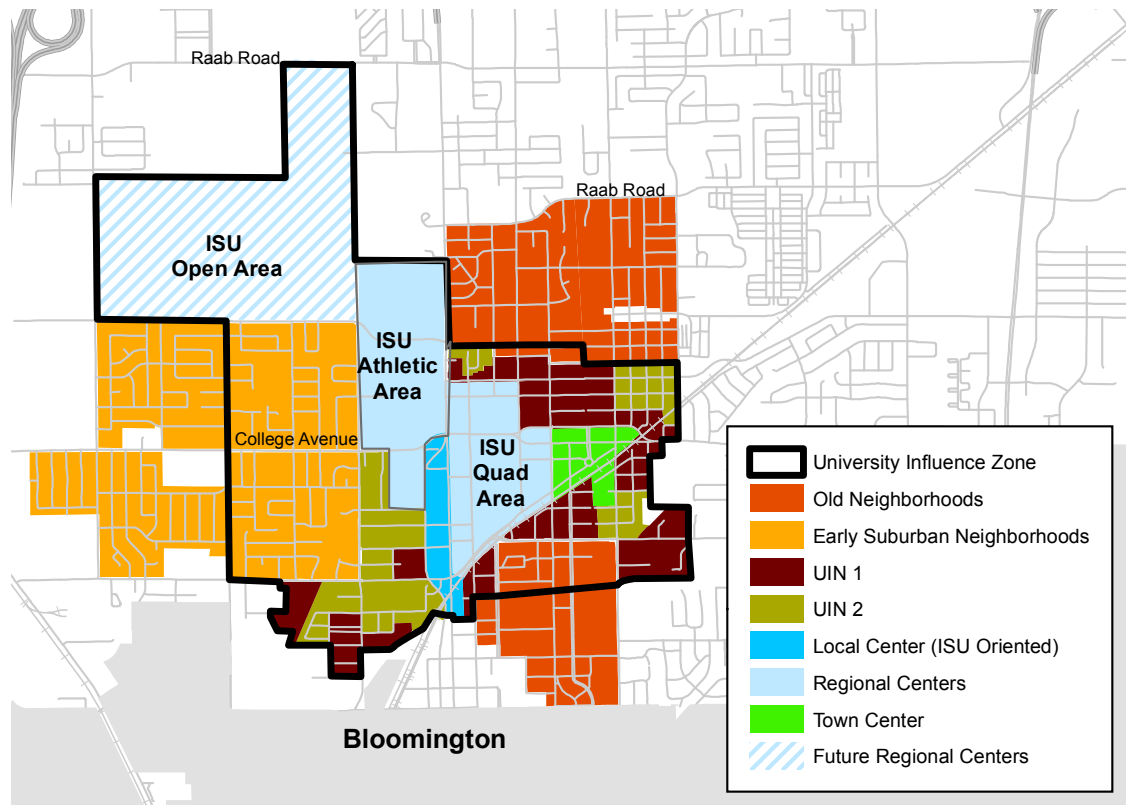
Partner Agencies

- Uptown Normal
- Neighborhood associations
- Apartment managers
- Normal Historic Preservation Commission

Metrics

- Residential density
- Nuisances
- Residential market values
- Residential rents
- Commercial rents
- Accessibility metrics
[See Planning Framework.]

MAP TGI: University Influence Zone



University Influence Zone (UIZ): Area with the greatest direct and indirect influence by the University and its students. This includes not only the ISU campus and grounds, but also neighborhoods impacted by off-campus student housing or the temporary presence of students.

University Influence Neighborhoods 1 (UIN 1): Student-oriented, predominantly rental residential neighborhoods. Most of these neighborhoods are zoned for medium- to high-density residential districts. New housing developments occur by demolishing single-family residential units and small, outdated multifamily structures and replacing them with denser multi-family apartment complexes. The purpose of this delineation is to ensure that denser student housing is contained in this area and students feel safe and welcome.

University Influence Neighborhoods 2 (UIN 2): Most of the neighborhoods in UIN 2 are zoned R1-B, Single-Family Residence District. Homes in these neighborhoods are smaller and very affordable (range \$100K to \$150K). Given their affordability and proximity to ISU campus, these neighborhoods experience tremendous pressure to convert single-family homes into student rental properties. The purpose of designating this area is to protect the single-family nature and the affordability of the neighborhoods.

Local Center–ISU oriented: The retail area along Main Street from Willow Street on the North to Hovey Avenue on the South. Students are a captive market at this center which can largely be characterized by a mix of eating and drinking establishments and mixed-use student apartments.

ISU Quad Area: This area includes the ISU Quad, a focal point of campus life, and most of the University’s busiest and most beloved buildings and open spaces. ISU oversees all of the planning and capital investment in this area.

ISU Athletic Area: This area houses ISU’s popular athletic facilities and other major venues, along with some on-campus housing, and is a major regional destination. This area has major influences on traffic patterns along Main Street.

ISU Open Area: This area includes ISU’s golf course and over 300 acres of vacant, ISU-owned property on Gregory Street.



Strategy TG2.1—Heighten Coordination of Planning Activities between ISU and the Town, Particularly in the University Influence Zone (UIZ)

Strategy TG2.2—Enhance the Public Realm within the UIZ

- TG2.2a Establish Uniform Urban Design Guidelines in the UIZ
- TG2.2b Work Closely with ISU to Enhance Multimodal Transportation Options and Experiences on Campus
- TG2.2c Prioritize Placemaking Investments in the UIZ
- TG2.2d Enhance University Gateways

Strategy TG2.3—Continue to Promote Dense, Urban-Style Development within the Centers and UIN1

- TG2.3a Rethink Parking Regulations
- TG2.3a Support Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- TG2.3b Amend Sidewalk Requirements in the UIZ

Strategy TG2.4—Make UIN 1 a Welcoming Area for Students

- TG2.4a Ensure Dense and Affordable Student Housing
- TG2.4b Engage in Ongoing Conversations to Identify Student Housing Needs
- TG2.4c Work Collaboratively with ISU and Student Apartment Managers to Gather Data About Off-Campus Housing

Strategy TG2.5—Protect the Single-Family Nature of the Neighborhoods in UIN 2

- TG2.5a Promote the Non-Student Nature of These Affordable Neighborhoods
- TG2.5b Improve the Capacity of Neighborhoods to Deal with Planning and Quality of Life Issues

Courtesy Illinois State University

Strategy TG2.1—Heighten Coordination of Planning Activities between ISU and the Town, Particularly in the University Influence Zone (UIZ)

Both the Town and ISU are constantly engaged in planning activities within UIZ. These plans have the potential to directly or indirectly affect the physical, social, economic, environmental and cultural interests of both parties. Enhanced communications and collaboration could lead to building bigger or better projects than either entity could accomplish alone. A few possibilities include:

- Coordinating long-term planning activities
- Engaging each other in capital improvement planning in the area
- Utilizing the innovation district, which largely overlaps with the UIZ, as a pilot area to test innovative ideas. Example: providing a test bed for ISU Innovative Consulting Group students working on utilizing recycled glass for sidewalks.
- Gathering data and exchanging information on topics like student housing inventory
- Publishing a list of joint projects annually



Courtesy Illinois State University



Strategy TG2.2—Enhance the Public Realm within the UIZ

The public realm is composed of elements such as streets, sidewalks, light fixtures, plants, street furniture, and the quality and framing of buildings, public art, signage, and ambience. The public realm of the campus and the surrounding neighborhoods plays a key role in the physical and contextual identity of the campus and influences the quality of Town-Gown relationships. The scale and setting of ISU's campus (somewhat small and urban), its proximity to Uptown, and its evolving role in supporting innovation and entrepreneurship all present opportunities to create an urban design framework that highlights the University's efforts, complements the Town's redevelopment initiatives, and becomes a point of pride for students and neighbors.

TG2.2a—Establish Uniform Urban Design Guidelines in the UIZ

The Town and University should work together to establish these guidelines, taking into account existing plans within ISU and the Town as well as the intent and purpose of various existing and proposed districts.

TG2.2b—Work Closely with ISU to Enhance Multimodal Transportation Options and Experiences on Campus

The area around campus has the highest usage of multiple modes of transportation—walking, bicycling, and using transit. It also has the greatest potential for expanded use of all these alternative modes. Thus, the Town should continue to work closely with ISU to continue implementing the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and expanding and enhancing Connect Transit service.

TG2.2c—Prioritize Placemaking Investments in the UIZ

Such investments should include streetscape improvements, the addition of public art, and public park additions. For example, the Town could work with ISU to continue the Uptown streetscape down North Street, west of Fell.

[See Community Identity & Public Places Element for more recommendations.]

TG2.2d—Enhance University Gateways

The Town should collaborate with ISU on the design and enhancement of University gateways, which would both announce the presence of the University and help demarcate boundaries. The University may also participate in the gateway on North Main Street, as it is a primary entry point for ISU families.



New gateway at the intersection of Fell Ave and North Street as envisioned in the 2010–2030 ISU Master Plan; other university gateways proposed in the master plan include Normal and Willow and College and Main Street

Image source: ISU Master Plan 2010–2030

Strategy TG2.3—Continue to Promote Dense, Urban-Style Development within the Centers and UIN1

Development in the immediate ISU area on Main Street has been shifting toward a denser model with a greater mix of uses. This has been supported by planning, regulation, and consumer preferences. This momentum should be continued and may be aided by the following actions:

TG2.3a—Rethink Parking Regulations

As discussed throughout this plan, changes in mobility choices will dramatically alter the Town's landscape during the horizon period of this plan. University neighborhoods will be among the first to witness such changes as younger generations choose new mobility options such as car-sharing and ride-sharing. The Town's current minimum parking regulations (particularly in the UIN 1, which overlaps significantly with the Parking Impact Zone (PIZ)) are at odds with this shift and with the overall vision established in this document. In other words, the current zoning code requires too much parking.

A considerable (and growing) body of literature is showing that over-prescribed parking, such as that imposed through the PIZ induces demand for automobile use, reduces available housing options, raises monthly rental rates, results in poor urban design, and creates a significant opportunity cost on property taxes.

The Town should study parking occupancy in the ISU-oriented Center and the UIN1 with the ultimate goal of eliminating minimum parking requirements for apartments in those areas.

Case Study:

- The City of Champaign eliminated minimum parking requirements for apartments in their University District in 2015 after they conducted a parking study that revealed the demand for parking was significantly lower than the requirements at that time. As a Central Illinois community, Champaign could be a great case study to help the Town of Normal understand the pros and cons of such deregulation.

Parking Impact Zone (PIZ)

In 2001 the Town created the Parking Impact Zone to address what was then considered to be a significant parking issue around the ISU campus. In the campus area, non-student residents were frustrated by the amount of on-street student parking and the related noise and litter issues. By requiring more parking on-site, the theory was that there would be fewer cars parking outside the immediate student residential areas. Prior to the PIZ, the maximum required parking for any apartment unit regardless of the number of bedrooms was 2 parking spaces. The PIZ created a new requirement for 1 parking space per bedroom. Over time, the down sides of the PIZ became apparent in the design of new student apartment projects. Parking became the #1 factor in the site layout, which resulted in several fairly unsightly buildings. One of the most unattractive styles was called the "building on stilts," where parking was on the ground level with the building above.

In 2010 the Town revised the PIZ requirements to require only .75 parking spaces per bedroom. While one or two developers have continued to opt for 1 parking space per bedroom in new construction, most projects since 2010 have been built to meet the minimum .75 spaces per bedroom. Town staff is not aware that this has caused any significant issues for the landlords or residents.

TG2.3a—Support Innovation and Entrepreneurship

As called for in the Economic Vitality Element, the Town should work with ISU and the business community to create an Innovation District with a priority placed on technological improvements that support innovation and entrepreneurship.

TG2.3b—Amend Sidewalk Requirements

Because this center is almost active 24 hours per day when students are present, redevelopment should include wider sidewalks to allow for a spillover effect of the surrounding retail and residential activity.

Strategy TG2.4—Make UIN 1 a Welcoming Area for Students

TG2.4a—Ensure Dense and Affordable Student Housing

Most of UIN 1 is already zoned R3-A or R3-B and is well suited for denser residential development. The Town should continue to encourage denser developments in the UIN 1 with a new consideration of affordability.

TG2.4b—Engage in Ongoing Conversations to Identify Student Housing Needs

All future housing studies should include collaboration between the Town, ISU, and the apartment management companies. This will become even more critical if the percentage of international students increases as is currently being planned by ISU.

TG2.4c—Work Collaboratively with ISU and Student Apartment Managers to Gather Data About Off-Campus Housing



Strategy TG2.5—Protect the Single-Family Nature of the Neighborhoods in UIN 2

TG2.5a—Promote the Non-Student Nature of These Affordable Neighborhoods

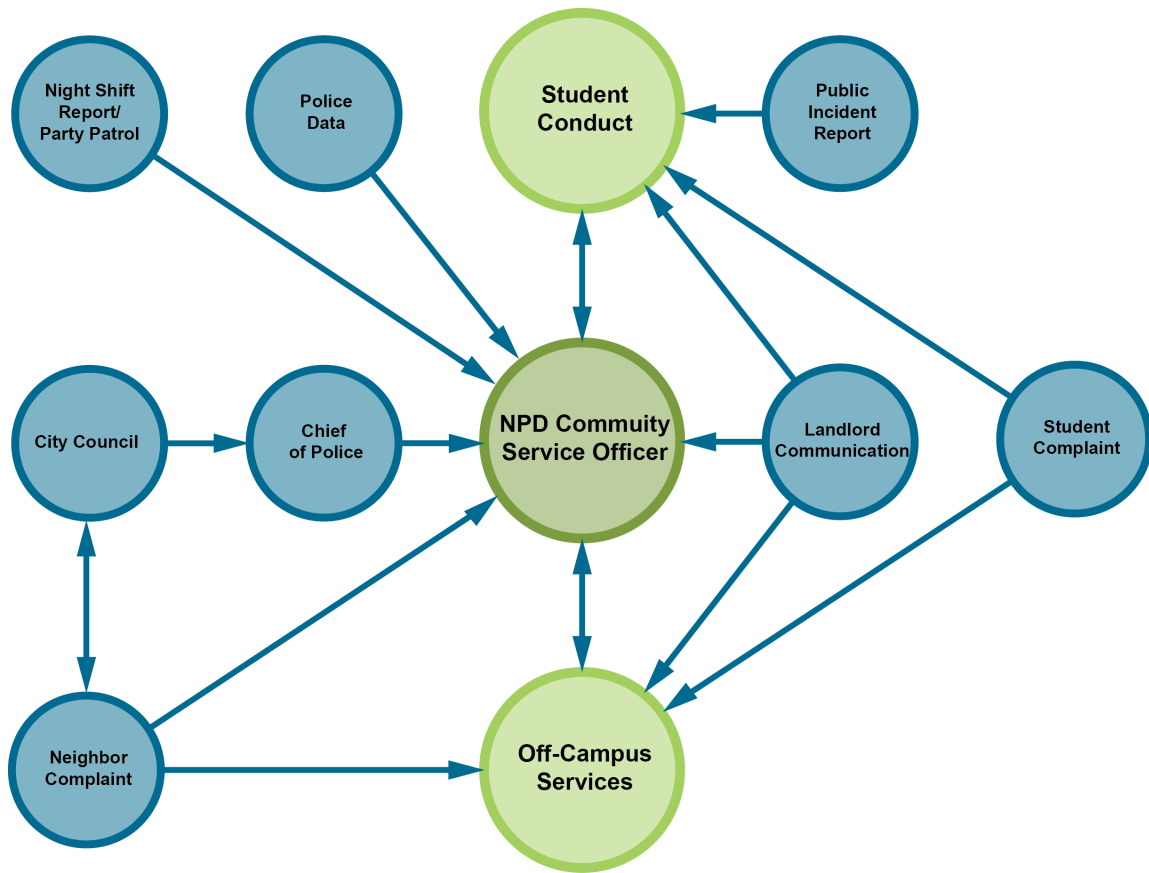
The UIN 2 area provides a very important collection of affordable houses with ready access to transit, multiuse trails, and myriad walkable services and jobs. These strengths also make the area vulnerable to a transition to student residential use. The Town is committed to nondiscriminatory policies toward students—in fact, the municipal code prohibits discrimination based on matriculation. However, there are general lifestyle conflicts that create neighborhood tension when too many students live in proximity to non-students. The following actions could aid the Town in maintaining the delicate balance in respecting students and non-students alike.

- Continue to limit the number of unrelated individuals who can live together in single-family residential districts to a maximum of 2. This is a very strict requirement when compared to other university communities, and it has served UIN 2 well.
- Maintain the current lower-density residential zoning.
- An Employer-Assisted Housing program supported by ISU, the Town of Normal, and Advocate BroMenn could help boost non-student occupancy in this area.
- Protect the existing housing stock, and hence the affordability, of this neighborhood by creating and maintaining a housing condition inventory and providing incentives to help retrofit the housing stock for physical accessibility.

TG2.5b—Improve the Capacity of Neighborhoods to Deal with Planning and Quality of Life Issues

- Work closely with neighborhood groups in these areas to further identify specific issues and gaps. In neighborhoods without an organized neighborhood group, the Town should work with the neighbors to organize one.
- Promote NAT, specifically the Community Service Officer (CSO), as a single point of contact for both Town- and University-related issues

Figure TG1: NAT's Functionality



Community Services Officer (CSO)

The Community Services Unit is staffed by one full time sworn police officer (Community Service Officer) and is responsible for responding to citizen requests for services outside of daily patrol operations. These requests include presentations to community groups, addressing neighborhood concerns, and providing education about various law enforcement topics and activities. Additionally, the Community Services Unit organizes the Neighborhood Watch Program; coordinates the Summer Youth Program; organizes recruitment efforts; coordinates the “Coffee with a Cop”; acts as a point of contact for landlord-tenant relations; and responds to other community-related issues as they arise. The CSO is a main point of contact for the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution and Dean of Students offices at Illinois State University and is an active member of the Neighborhood Action Team. The relationship has proven very effective when working with student-related concerns such as neighbor disputes and large student parties. The CSO maintains all of Normal Police Department’s (NPD) social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Nextdoor and the NPD website, www.npd.org.

Endnotes

1. <http://il-normal.civicplus.com/1345/Town-and-Gown>
2. Paragraphs closely paraphrased from http://nerche.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=341&
3. Closely paraphrased from <https://www.itga.org/certificateprogram>



Courtesy Illinois State University



**COMMUNITY
IDENTITY
& PUBLIC PLACES**

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.”

—Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

Community Identity & Public Places CONTENTS

E7.3	Introduction
E7.6	Goal CP1: Celebrate historic and cultural aspects unique to Normal and embrace those that continue to shape the community's identity in the future.
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E7.16	Strategy CP2.1—Enhance Placemaking Efforts
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A community's identity is its core element of being and expression, of uniqueness in a globalized world. It is visible in everything from local history and culture to favorite spots to grab lunch, annual festivals, architecture styles, and public institutions.

Normal's identity is strong and distinct, shaped by its history and unique local assets and by every member of the community. Normal is defined by a culture of lifelong learning; agricultural roots; family-friendly neighborhoods; a wealth of arts and entertainment amenities; a forward-thinking and sustainable approach to community development; and, in Bloomington, a similarly vibrant and prosperous twin city.

This chapter, then, is not about *creating* a community identity. Rather, it is about recognizing the identity that already exists and building on it through programming and urban design. It is about fostering *a sense of place*, a shared understanding of what makes Normal unique.

There are a number of things the Town can do to contribute to that understanding. Some will be subtle and may even be invisible, whether because they have no tangible, physical manifestation or because they involve preserving what we already have. Cataloging, preserving, and enhancing our historical and cultural assets; embracing and celebrating our diversity; and fostering community engagement and leadership all fall into this category.

Other measures will be more visible. In particular, the Town's role as a steward of public spaces allows it to have a palpable impact on our sense of place. Public spaces—streets, parks, trails, streams, public buildings—are where that sense is often strongest, because public spaces are used by everyone, together. We travel, mingle, relax, work, and demonstrate in our public spaces. They are where we connect with each other, a collection of individuals forming a community.



The image on the left looks south down Main Street at its intersection with Raab Road (a major gateway for the Town); the image on the right is from Brook Road in Richmond, Virginia. Without knowing that these two places are in different parts of the country, it becomes difficult to distinguish one from the other. Land use choices and urban design heavily influence the evolution of a community's identity.

Images source: Google Maps

Great Places are:

Diverse—having a mix of land uses to attract people throughout the day and night and to include people of all abilities and incomes.

Engaging—invoking the senses, encouraging interaction between individuals and their environment, facilitating interactions among people.

Memorable—presenting unique elements and qualities that make a place easy to remember and worthy of additional visits.

Ongoing—planning and design of a place and its uses are always open to the public to contribute to and feel ownership in. Places are never “finished,” they are always evolving.

Connection to the Vision

Core Value 1: Engagement. Ours is a resourceful and collaborative community that fuels civic engagement and inspires meaningful and generous contributions from residents of all walks of life.

Core Value 3: Spaces. Ours is an inter-related community visible through safe and accessible spaces that people love.

Core Value 5: Multiculturalism. Ours is an inclusive and welcoming community that celebrates our unique and diverse backgrounds, identities, cultures, and talents.

Core Value 7: Creativity. Ours is a creative community that promotes art and artists as an essential infrastructure and values art as a powerful process for bringing people—and ideas—together.

GOALS

GOAL CP1: Celebrate historic and cultural aspects unique to Normal and embrace those that continue to shape the community’s identity in the future.

GOAL CP2: Utilize the public realm as a canvas to showcase Normal’s identity and establish a strong sense of place.

Goal CP1: Celebrate historic and cultural aspects unique to Normal and embrace those that continue to shape the community's identity in the future.

A strong and healthy community identity can act as a driver for other elements of the community, like the local economy or the social cohesion between residents. It is not something that can be created or improved overnight. It must be nurtured over many years by all members of the community, developing and evolving through their use of public spaces. Understanding and celebrating this evolution is vital for it to continue and for Normal to achieve its vision for the future.

Positive Contributors

- Constitution and Route 66 Trails
- Uptown redevelopment efforts
- Illinois Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's School (ISSCS) site and buildings
- Illinois State University (ISU) campus
- Historic Districts
- Landmark Properties
- Parks
- Railroads

Challenges

- An east side versus west side mentality
- The dwindling of historical knowledge and loss of artisanship and skills regarding historical technologies
- The need for volunteers and champions when trying to begin a new project or implement a new program

Indicators and Metrics

- Analyze the spread of public events throughout the year to identify gaps and opportunities
- Establish demographic baselines for programming attendance, park usage, space reservations, etc. and track progress overtime

Partners

- Town of Normal Historic Preservation Commission
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
- Town entities like the Normal Theater, Children's Discovery Museum, and Connie Link Amphitheater
- Normal Public Library
- Uptown Partners
- Corn Crib

- Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Illinois State University
- Heartland Community College
- McLean County Museum of History
- Conexiones Latinas de McLean County
- McLean County Indian Association
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- Unity Community Center
- Theater groups
- Marcfirst
- Special Olympics Illinois
- Normal Township Activity & Recreation Center

Community Identity and Cultural Assets in Normal

An appreciation for a community's identity is built on an understanding of its past, its present, and its vision for the future. Following is a brief inventory of the historical forces that shaped Normal's identity; elements of its current cultural character; and how Normal can continue to strengthen its identity into the future.

Historical Context for Normal's Community Identity

- **Agriculture:** Agriculture was a core economic driver in the development of the Town. Early businesses included artisan farms, orchards, nurseries, and gardens.
- **Education:** Education has been a pillar of the Town since before it was officially incorporated in 1865. Illinois State Normal University, for which the Town was named, was established in 1857 and renamed to Illinois State University (ISU) in 1968. Heartland Community College (HCC) and Lincoln College were also established in Normal towards the end of the 20th century.
- **Caring for Children:** Illinois Soldiers' & Sailors' Children's School (ISSCS) was established in Normal in 1865 as a home for orphans of those who died in the Civil War; it was the first public welfare institution for children in Illinois. At the beginning of the 20th century, The Baby Fold was established as a private entity in the community providing similar services. These two organizations served children through WWI, the Great Depression, and WWII. Service at ISSCS ended in 1979 but The Baby Fold continues to operate today.
- **Railroads:** Through Jesse W. Fell's diligence, railroads were routed through Normal to provide local agricultural businesses access to freight transportation throughout the Midwest.
- **Circus:** The circus has had a strong presence in Normal for the majority of the Town's existence. As early as the end of the 19th century, a large number of circus performers spent their off-season training months in the community. This tradition paved the way for the creation of the Gamma Phi Circus, the oldest collegiate circus in the nation, at ISU in 1929.
- **Route 66 Highway:** One of the original highways of the US Highway System, Route 66 ran through the heart of Normal on its way from Chicago to St. Louis. It became one of the nation's most famous roads due to its role in the westward migrations of the 1920s and 30s.
- **Twin Cities:** Since the Town's inception, Bloomington and Normal have been mutually influential. Outside of governmental functions, the two municipalities virtually merge into one community that works, lives, and plays without paying attention to the dividing line.

Normal Today

- **Small Town Feel with Big City Amenities:** Normal is a small town of approximately fifty-five thousand people but has many big city assets and amenities like universities, medical centers, museums, theaters, water parks, golf courses, retail centers, multi-modal transportation, and more.
- **Family-Friendly:** The community prides itself on being family-friendly with good schools and parks. Sports, recreation opportunities, and extra-curricular activities are highly valued.
- **Sports:** Sports tourism is a growing sector of the local economy, driven by the many sports teams and tournaments in the community.
- **Bike-Friendly:** There is an emerging biking culture encouraged by the Constitution Trail, the Route 66 Trail, the new Bike Share 309 program, and local bike advocacy groups. The League of American Bicyclists recently awarded Normal the Bronze Level designation as a Bike Friendly Community.
- **Striving for Sustainability:** Uptown Circle and the surrounding buildings were among the first projects to achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Neighborhood Development plan certification. Uptown South is taking the Living Communities Challenge to guide redevelopment efforts in that area.
- **Diverse:** The community features increasing ethnically diverse and foreign-born populations, people of all age groups and abilities, and a growing support network for LGBTQIA individuals.
- **Local Food:** Assets like community gardens, a food forest, local breweries, a co-operative grocery store, and farm-to-table restaurants are at the forefront in creating a local food system in the community.
- **Performing Arts:** Theater productions like the Illinois Shakespeare Festival have become cultural mainstays and the Connie Link Amphitheater hosts a variety of musical and dramatic stage events each year.

Normal 2040 will:

- *Preserve and Celebrate its History*
- *Embrace its Existing Assets*
- *Showcase its Identity in Public Places*
- *Create Unique Places and*
- *Effectively Utilize Technology to transform Public Places*



Aerial View of Normal Corn Crib

Image Courtesy BN Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Strategy CP1.1—Protect and Promote Historic Elements That Contribute to Normal’s Unique Identity

CP1.1a Enhance Historic and Cultural Preservation Efforts

CP1.1b Continue to Promote Route 66 as a Historic and Cultural Corridor

Strategy CP1.2—Build Upon Existing Community Assets to Develop a Stronger Identity

CP1.2a Facilitate Creation of Unique Places

Strategy CP1.3—Embrace and Celebrate Cultural Diversity

CP1.3a Bring Life to Public Places with Events and Programming

CP1.3b Ensure That the Visual Cues in Public Rights-of-Way Are Multicultural, Inclusive, and Welcoming

Strategy CP1.4—Nurture Leaders and Volunteers to Preserve and Promote Identity



Image courtesy of ISU Milner Library

Strategy CP1.1—Protect and Promote Historic Elements that Contribute to Normal’s Unique Identity

CP1.1a—Enhance Historic and Cultural Preservation Efforts

- Emphasize preservation of historic buildings, neighborhoods, districts, and other historically significant physical features.
- Compile and maintain a comprehensive database of artistic, cultural, and historic assets and resources throughout Normal. The Town can partner with ISU Milner Library, McLean County Museum of History, and McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC) on this effort. (Q)
- Build upon the vast repository of people, places, and things celebrated during the various Normal 1-5-0 events held in 2015 to honor Normal’s sesquicentennial. (Q)
- Support the development of a local food system to help revive Normal’s agricultural roots. *[See Economic Vitality Element for more information.]*
- Collaborate with local and regional partners to leverage historical attractions via traditional and non-traditional formats such as themed events and walking or biking tours.

CP1.1b—Continue to Promote Route 66 as a Historic and Cultural Corridor

[See Cultural Corridors in the Corridors Chapter of the Planning Framework Section.]



Host to the ISSCS historic buildings, a public park, a food forest, Heartland indoor theater and community spaces, a school, and several commercial uses, the One Normal Plaza area is one of Normal’s most unique places.

Strategy CP1.2—Build Upon Existing Community Assets to Develop a Stronger Identity

CP1.2a—Facilitate Creation of Unique Places

- Continue developing Uptown as a center for art, entertainment, learning, transportation, sustainability, and technology.
- Establish the proposed Innovation District to act as a regional epicenter for education, medical services, art, sustainability, and technology.
- Develop and program Normal's portfolio of parks and recreational facilities in a manner that gives each one its own unique identity.
- Pursue a public-private partnership for the ISSCS campus and surrounding One Normal Plaza parkland to make improvements that underscore and celebrate the historic and cultural heritage of the area.
- Enhance bike, pedestrian, and transit connections to the HCC campus.
- Partner with MCRPC and the neighborhood groups in developing neighborhood level plans to identify and preserve aspects unique to their neighborhood.
- Improve major community gateways to showcase Normal's identity [See Map CP1].



Strategy CP1.3—Embrace and Celebrate Cultural Diversity

Jesse W. Fell, Normal’s founding father, envisioned a community open and welcoming to all. Building on this strong founding principle, the Town should take every opportunity to celebrate current residents and embrace new ones.

CP1.3a—Bring Life to Public Places with Events and Programming

- Promote existing events that showcase Normal’s cultural diversity. (Q)
- Consider new events that would appeal to diverse audiences.
- Collaborate with multicultural groups to address needs regarding cultural programming and events.

CP1.3b—Ensure That the Visual Cues in Public Rights-of-Way Are Multicultural, Inclusive, and Welcoming



1. El Dia de los Muertos, 2. Santa’s Station, 3. Saint Patrick’s Day Parade, 4. Make Music Normal
5. Gamma Phi Circus, 6. Sugar Creek Arts Festival, 7. Light the Night
8. Sweet Corn Blues Festival, 9. Summer Theatre Productions

Strategy CP1.4—Nurture Leaders and Volunteers to Preserve and Promote Identity

A community's identity is only sustained and enhanced if there is a sense of community engagement with and ownership of the Town's various happenings. Completing the many actions recommended in this *Plan* and attaining the vision for 2040 cannot happen without support from volunteers, community groups, and champions of projects and programs.

- Partner with local leadership programs (e.g., Leadership McLean County and the Multicultural Leadership Program) to support individuals and groups with diverse backgrounds and interests. (Q)
- Create volunteering opportunities to promote broad-based community engagement. Design these to accommodate varying time commitments and encourage entire family participation.
- Consider partnering with a local not-for-profit organization or university to manage volunteers.
- Enhance partnerships with local universities to integrate volunteer activities with academic credits for students.
- Collaborate with advocacy, conservation, ethnic/cultural, recreation, art, and hobby groups in the community on projects, events, and programming.



Leadership McLean County Class of 2017
Source: Leadership McLean County Facebook

Goal CP2: Utilize the public realm as a canvas to showcase Normal’s identity and establish a strong sense of place.

The public realm consists of all space open to the public, including streets, sidewalks, trails, parks, parking lots, green spaces, detention ponds, and civic buildings. Many opportunities exist to transform these spaces into *places* that showcase the historic and contemporary elements of Normal’s identity. Such places act as public living rooms for the community, where people go about their daily routines, have chance encounters and intentional gatherings, and stage events and activities open to the public. Most importantly, these places can become laboratories for the Town as it seeks to realize its vision.

The primary method used by cities of all sizes across the country to develop and maintain great public places is called *placemaking*. The goal of placemaking is to turn a space in the built environment—a street, a park, a public building—into something more than the sum of its parts, a place that people remember and adopt as their own. This requires urban design that celebrates and builds on a community’s identity while being welcoming and accessible to everyone. Is the space safely and conveniently accessible for all ages of users and modes of transportation? Is it welcoming? Does it reflect the history and diversity of the surrounding community? Is it unique or aesthetically pleasing? Does it give people reasons to hang out for a while?

We should be able to answer “yes” to all of these questions. But placemaking is more an approach or a philosophy than a checklist. Placemaking requires a willingness to go beyond the core or typical function of a space and consider all the ways people might interact with it. When cities see the potential for their streets to be more than just rights-of-way for automobiles; empty parking lots to become markets, parks, or public squares; public buildings to be not only useful, but distinctive, fun, and sustainable; then they start turning nondescript spaces into great and memorable places.

Positive Contributors

- Uptown redevelopment efforts
- Constitution and Route 66 Trails
- Parks
- Harmon Arts Grants

Challenges

- Capital requirements for producing public amenities
- Engineering design guidelines

Indicators and Metrics

- Property values near public amenities
- Number of trail users at various times of the day, week, and year
- Bike and pedestrian counts on streets and sidewalks
- Number of public art installations

Partners

- McLean County Unit 5 School District
- Town entities like the Normal Theater, Children’s Discovery Museum, and Connie Link Amphitheater
- Normal Public Library
- Illinois State University and Heartland Community College
- Corn Crib
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC)
- Illinois Arts Council Agency



Strategy CP2.1—Enhance Placemaking Efforts

- CP2.1a Encourage Compact Development Patterns with Mixed Land Uses
- CP2.1b Continue to Locate and Build Public Buildings in a Manner That Raises the Bar for Architectural Distinction and Placemaking
- CP2.1c Reimagine Public Spaces as Unique Places
- CP2.1d Capitalize on Parks as Models of Placemaking

Strategy CP2.2—Showcase Normal as a Smart City Through Effective Use of Technology in Public Places

Strategy CP2.3—Promote Public Art in All Aspects of Urban Design

Strategy CP2.1—Enhance Placemaking Efforts

Placemaking refers to the use of public or private investments, programming, or other actions to facilitate the conversion of regular spaces into diverse, engaging, memorable, and ever-evolving places. These actions help build identity, spur activity and vitality, and promote active living by creating places that people want to be in all year long.

CP2.1a—Encourage Compact Development Patterns with Mixed Land Uses

The most inviting and beloved spaces are designed for pedestrians. This can only be accomplished in a setting with compact development, a mix of land uses, and multiple modes of transportation that mitigate the need for significant amounts of parking. *[See the Planning Framework Chapter for details.]*

CP2.1b—Continue to Locate and Build Public Buildings in a Manner That Raises the Bar for Architectural Distinction and Placemaking

Public projects offer a unique opportunity to create dynamic and memorable places, and the quality of their construction translates into a visual impact over many generations. Thus, every new public structure presents a significant opportunity for placemaking. Examples include Uptown Station, the Children’s Discovery Museum, and the Fire Headquarters.



Uptown Station at night

CP2.1c—Reimagine Public Spaces to Become Unique Places

Actively work to expand the use of public places.

- Open streets to non-vehicular uses and turn them into places that promote interpersonal interactions and neighborhood events. Tactical urbanism is one popular method for doing this that many municipalities are taking advantage of. (Q)
- Consider ways in which public storm water detention ponds can serve public recreational purposes, such as fishing, and provide trail space for walking and bicycling.



PARK(ing) Day in Chicago. PARK(ing) Day is an international event where pop-up parks take over street parking spaces in order to spread awareness about the need for more park space and community space in urban areas.

Image source: Flickr user metablossom



A pop-up intersection redesign in Minneapolis, Minnesota incorporating bicycles into the roadway design

Image source: Flickr user nickfalbo

Tactical urbanism refers to the variety of low-cost, temporary changes intended to improve the built environment. A common form of tactical urbanism is pop-up planning, where various public amenities like parks and bike lanes temporarily appear as a way to visualize and experience what a more permanent change would mean.

CP2.1d—Capitalize on Parks as Models of Placemaking

Given their high visibility, large size, and significant visitorship, Normal's parks are already unique places. The Town should further capitalize on this by incorporating new trends and best practices.

- Continue to provide opportunities for both passive and active recreation.
- Normal already has parks with specific areas of emphasis, including the water park features at Anderson and Fairview, the cultural offerings at the Connie Link Amphitheatre and the dog park at Shepard. Consider improvements to existing parks that enhance their uniqueness by featuring things such as fitness equipment, adventure playgrounds, and parks accessible to kids and adults with physical and developmental disabilities.
- Parks with large amounts of open space (like One Normal Plaza) could play host to additional public events for the community.
- Continue to work closely with the McLean County Unit 5 School District to co-locate parks near schools, a model that has served the community well.
- Continue to utilize school and university facilities after hours and during the summer as much as possible for community programming.



A fitness park in Dublin, Ohio

Image source: City of Dublin, Parks and Recreation



Parks for populations with Physical and Emotional disabilities in Beaverton, Oregon

Image source: Taulatin Hills Park and Recreation District

ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS

Adventure playgrounds intentionally prioritize free and unstructured play for their users. Common playground equipment like swings, slides, and climbing bars are seen as too constricting on the types of play they allow. Adventure playgrounds, on the other hand, are designed to help users build creativity, problem-solving, and teamwork skills by leaving the type of play up to them. As of this writing, only seven adventure playgrounds exist in the country.



The Adventure Playground in Berkeley, California

Image source: Flickr user tkazec

Strategy CP2.2—Showcase Normal as a Smart City Through Effective Use of Technology in Public Places

Strategically integrate advanced technologies into existing infrastructure investments. Examples include multifunctional “smart lighting” poles, expanded public Wi-Fi, and location of renewable energy installations on public properties.



Solar panels above a parking lot provide shade and generate energy.
Image source: Flickr user stuartwildlife



A digital transit stop shows schedules, routes, and nearby destinations.
Image courtesy of CHK America



An electronic bicycle and pedestrian counter in San Francisco.
Image source: Streetsblog San Francisco



Electronic message boards in Austin, Texas
Image source: Town of Normal staff

Strategy CP2.3—Promote Public Art in All Aspects of Urban Design

Public art encompasses much more than sculptures, statues, and paintings. It includes every aspect of the visual experience, from landscaping to architecture, public infrastructure, and every other physical element in a space. Public art can make a statement or start a conversation. It can add visual cues that enhance navigation and wayfinding. Ultimately, public art can influence how memorable a place is and, in turn, how economically successful a community can become.

The appropriate incorporation of public art can be supported by the establishment of a public arts ordinance or a public arts advisory committee to examine infrastructure and development projects for ways to incorporate public art.



Landscaping along Beaufort Street creates a vibrant streetscape.

Public infrastructure like bridges and streets provide ample opportunities for public art.



The Lego Bridge in Wuppertal, Germany, an example of a bridge turned into an iconic structure through art.

Image source: Wikimedia Commons user Morty



The City of Rochester, New York utilizes its BoulevArt Program to support community development and traffic safety through painted murals on residential streets.

Photo courtesy of Michael E. Tomb



College Avenue/Main Street pedestrian underpass.



Union Pacific railroad bridge crossing School Street.



Pedestrian bridge connecting Oakdale Avenue to Oakdale Elementary School.



Union Pacific railroad bridge crossing W.Vernon Avenue.

Public art can be a driver for sustainability.



The image on the left shows a metal tree whose leaves are actually small wind turbines; the image on the right is of the Ross Lovegrove Solar Tree in Milan, Italy.

Left image courtesy of NewWind R & D; right image source: Flickr user ricrossi



PLANNING
APPENDIX

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- A Caring Touch [H]
- Activity & Recreation Center - Normal Township * [H]
- Advocate BroMenn Medical Center [H]
- AMBUCS (Cornbelt Chapter) [H]
- Audubon Society (local John Wesley Powell chapter)
- Autism McLean * [H]
- The Baby Fold * [H]
- Bike BloNo
- Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA) [H]
- Bloomington-Normal Area Homebuilders Association (BNHA) [H]
- Bloomington-Normal Association of Realtors (BNAR) [H]
- Bloomington-Normal Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Bloomington-Normal Economic Development Council (EDC)
- Bloomington and Normal Water Reclamation District (BNWRD)
- BN Advantage Leadership Council
- Center for Youth and Family Solutions * [H]
- Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network (CIRBN)
- Chestnut Health Systems * [H]
- Children's Discovery Museum
- Community Care Systems Inc. * [H]
- Community Health Care Clinic *
- Conexiones Latinas de McLean County
- Connect Transit
- Connie Link Amphitheater
- Corn Crib
- Country Financial
- East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging (EICAAA) * [H]
- Ecology Action Center (EAC)
- Economic Development Council (EDC)
- Faith in Action * [H]
- Friends of the Constitution Trail
- Friends of Everbloom
- Genesis House * [H]
- Greenways Advisory Committee
- Habitat for Humanity * [H]
- Heartland Community College (HCC)
- Higher Education Institutions
- Home Sweet Home Ministries * [H]
- Homes for Hope * [H]
- Illinois Arts Council Agency
- Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)
- Illinois Historic Preservation Agency
- Illinois Prairie Community Foundation (IPCF)
- Illinois State University (ISU)
- Illinois Wesleyan University (IWU)
- The Immigration Project * [H]
- Kiwanis Aktion Service Club [H]
- Labrynth * [H]
- Life Center for Independent Living (LIFE CIL) * [H]
- Mahomet Aquifer Consortium (MAC)
- Marcfirst * [H]
- McLean County Center for Human Services * [H]
- McLean County Chamber of Commerce
- McLean County Geographic Information Systems (McGIS)
- McLean County Government
- McLean County Health Department [H]
- McLean County Indian Association
- McLean County Museum of History
- McLean County Regional Planning Commission (MCRPC)
- McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)

Key

* means that it is a human service agency

[H] means the agency/organization refers to the Housing element

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- McLean County Unit 5 School District
- McLean County Wellness Coalition
- Mid Central Community Action (MCCA) * [H]
- Mobile Health Project [H]
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) *
- Nation developers focused on smart growth (LSTAR VENTURES)
- Normal Historic Preservation Commission
- Normal Public Library
- Normal Theatre
- Normal Township
- OSF St. Joseph Medical Center
- Park Lands Foundation
- Prairie Lands Preservation Foundation
- Project Oz * [H]
- Providing Access to Help (PATH) * [H]
- Ride Illinois
- Rivian
- Salvation Army * [H]
- SHOW BUS [H]
- Special Olympics Illinois
- State Farm Insurance
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Theater groups
- Town of Normal Historic Preservation Commission
- Unity Community Center
- United Way of McLean County * [H]
- Uptown Partners
- Uptown Normal
- University of Illinois Extension
- Veterans Assistance Commission (VAC) [H]
- Visiting Angels Living Assistance Services [H]
- Watershed Management Oversight Committee
- Western Avenue Community Center * [H]
- YMCA *
- YouthBuild of McLean County * [H]
- YWCA * [H]

Key

* means that it is a human service agency

[H] means the agency/organization refers to the Housing element

ABBREVIATIONS

3C	Comprehensive, Cooperative, and Continuing
AAA	American Automobile Association
AARP	American Association of Retired Persons
ADA	Americans with Disabilities
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMGI	Area Median Gross Income
AMI	Area Median Income or Advanced Metering Infrastructure (depending on the context)
APP	Advocate Physician Partners
AR	Augmented Reality
ARC	Activity and Recreation Center
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
AVL	Automatic Vehicle Location
B&I	Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program
BEAM	Bluegrass Economic Advancement Movement
BHA	Bloomington Housing Authority
BN	Bloomington-Normal
BNCESP	Bloomington-Normal Community Energy Strategic Plan
BNWRD	Bloomington and Normal Water Reclamation District
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CDFI	Community Development Financial Institution
CDGB	Community Development Block Grant
CESL	Community Engagement and Service Learning
CIP	Community Investment Plan or Capital Improvement Plan
CIRBN	Central Illinois Regional Broadband Network
CRA	Community Reinvestment Act
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
CSO	Community Service Officer
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
DOE	United States Department of Energy
DoIT	Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology
DOLETA	Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration
EAC	Ecology Action Center
EAV	Equalized Assessed Value
ECIAA	East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging
ED	Emergency Department
EDA	Economic Development Administration
EDC	Economic Development Council
EDD	Economic Development District
EDGE	Economic Development for a Growing Economy
EEPS	Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standards
eICU	Electronic Intensive Care Unit
EKG	Electrocardiogram

ABBREVIATIONS

EMA	Emergency Medical Agency
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPC	Energy Performance Contracting
ESCO	Energy Service Company
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FID	Food Innovation District
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GHz	Gigahertz
GIS	Geographic Information System
GO bonds	General Obligation bonds
GYN	Gynaecology
HCC	Heartland Community College
HHW	Household hazardous waste
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HOA	Home Owners Association
HOME	HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME)
HTF	Housing Trust Fund
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
IBM	International Business Machines Corporation
ICC	Innovation Consulting Community
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
IDNR	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
IDOT	Illinois Department of Transportation
IHDA	Illinois Housing Development Authority
IOBY	“In Our Back Yards”
IoT	Internet of Things
IPCF	Illinois Prairie Community Foundation
IPDES	Integrated Post-Secondary Education System
ISO	Insurance Services Office
ISSCS	Illinois Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Children’s School
ISU	Illinois State University
ISWMP	Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan
IT	Information Technology
ITGA	International Town and Gown Association
IWU	Illinois Wesleyan University
JUST certification	Social Justice Label
LCC	Living Communities Challenge
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LEED ND	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Neighborhood Development

ABBREVIATIONS

LGBTQIA	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual
LID	Low Impact Development
LIFE-CIL	LIFE Center for Independent Living
LIHTC	Low Income Housing Tax Credit
LMI	Low- and Moderate-Income
L RTP	Long Range Transportation Plan
MAAA	Mahomet Aquifer Advocacy Alliance
MABAS	Mutual Aid Box Alarm System
MAC	Mahomet Aquifer Consortium
MBE	Minority-Owned Business Enterprises
McGIS	McLean County Geographic Information Systems
MCRPC	McLean County Regional Planning Commission
MCN	Mennonite College of Nursing
METCOM	McLean County Emergency Telephone Communications
MFT	Motor Fuel Taxes
mgd	Millions of gallons/day
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
MS4s	Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MWh	Megawatt-hour
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NACTO	National Association of City Transportation Officials
NAHB	National Association of Home Builders
NAT	Neighborhood Action Team
NATOA	National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors
NCD	Neighborhood Conservation District
NFD	Normal Fire Department
NPD	Normal Police Department
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
NPL	Normal Public Library
O&M	Operations and Management
PABs	Private activities bonds
PACE	Property Assessed Clean Energy
PACP	Pipeline Assessment and Certification Program
PAYT	“Pay As You Throw”
PCBs	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PEAK	Program Eligibility and Application Kit
PFS	Pay for Success
PHAs	Public housing agencies
PIZ	Parking Impact Zone
PPP	Public Private Partnership
PUD	Planned Unit Development

ABBREVIATIONS

QPIB	Qualified Public Infrastructure Bonds
R&D	Research and development
REACH	Resident Education on Advocacy
RECs	Renewable Energy Credits
RLFs	Revolving loan funds
ROI	Return of public investments
RSF	Rudolf Steiner Foundation
RWSPC	Regional Water Supply Planning Committee
SBA	Small Business Association
SBDC	Small Business Development Center
SCC	Smart Cities Council
SIB	Social Impact Bonds
SMACC lab	The Social Media Analytics Command Center
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SRF	State Revolving Funds
SSA	Special Service Areas
SWCD	McLean County Soil and Water Conservation District
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TND	Traditional Neighborhood Design
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
UCLA	University of California, Los Angeles
UIN	University Influence Neighborhoods
UIZ	University Influence Zone
US DOT	United States Department of Transportation
US EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VR	Virtual Reality
WBE	Women-Owned Business Enterprises
WDC	Workforce Development Center
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
YE	Your Economy
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

FRAMEWORK APPENDIX

Appendix FN 1 - Baseline Metrics For Neighborhoods

Analysis Code	Residential Housing Units	Area (Acres)	Density (Units/Acre)	Housing Type Diversity Index	# Owner-Occupied	% Owner-Occupied	Special Needs Units	Nursing Home/ Assisted Living Units	Group Quarters	Section 8 Units	Senior Exemptions	% Senior Exemptions	1-Story Units	% 1-Story Units	Link-Node Ratio	SF Detached Average MV	Duplex Average MV
Old1	618	171.7412	3.60	0.70	387	62.62%	0	0	0	8	152	25%	275	44%	1.35	\$137,137	N/A
Old2	547	180.8707	3.02	0.72	319	58.32%	0	0	0	2	163	30%	262	48%	1.53	\$121,527	N/A
Old3	492	144.8513	3.40	0.67	348	70.73%	0	0	0	0	109	22%	149	30%	1.48	\$139,497	N/A
EarlySub1	672	239.5329	2.81	0.65	460	68.45%	0	0	140	15	140	21%	284	42%	1.36	\$135,612	Insufficient Data
EarlySub2	624	78.79712	7.92	0.70	269	43.11%	0	0	0	2	66	11%	126	20%	1.62	\$121,236	N/A
EarlySub3	705	57.46758	12.27	0.45	0	0.00%	0	0	0	63	5	1%	2	0%	1.80	N/A	N/A
EarlySub4	28	7.167788	3.91	0.53	18	64.29%	0	0	0	0	5	18%	18	64%	1.14	\$84,993	N/A
EarlySub5	741	259.1374	2.86	0.50	593	80.03%	4	0	0	1	301	41%	527	71%	1.33	\$144,505	N/A
EarlySub6	789	241.458	3.27	0.53	688	87.20%	3	0	0	2	419	53%	449	57%	1.38	\$157,864	\$125,108
EarlySub7	1262	256.6081	4.92	0.77	585	46.35%	7	111	0	15	195	15%	237	19%	1.39	\$137,640	Insufficient Data
EarlySub8	536	162.0852	3.31	0.51	462	86.19%	0	0	0	2	166	31%	199	37%	1.43	\$143,612	N/A
EarlySub9	656	160.1771	4.10	0.76	286	43.60%	0	149	0	17	145	22%	219	33%	1.28	\$142,631	N/A
EarlySub10	549	157.384	3.49	0.52	416	75.77%	0	0	0	5	196	36%	341	62%	1.34	\$118,776	N/A
EarlySub11	503	151.5968	3.32	0.63	396	78.73%	0	0	0	4	132	26%	121	24%	1.37	\$165,429	N/A
NewSub1	746	83.54883	8.93	0.48	290	38.87%	0	0	0	0	1	0%	1	0%	1.63	N/A	N/A
NewSub2	158	32.04146	4.93	0.73	78	49.37%	0	0	0	0	9	6%	16	10%	1.13	\$135,366	\$134,960
NewSub3	485	79.21261	6.12	0.59	164	33.81%	0	0	0	1	14	3%	75	15%	1.42	\$187,003	\$131,181
NewSub4	586	292.6504	2.00	0.46	577	98.46%	0	0	0	0	135	23%	62	11%	1.17	\$245,068	\$181,821
NewSub5	587	53.723	10.93	0.66	19	3.24%	0	0	0	48	12	2%	9	2%	1.25	Insufficient Data	\$108,071
NewSub6	267	39.98896	6.68	0.54	89	33.33%	0	0	0	0	69	26%	58	22%	1.18	N/A	\$186,311
NewSub7	391	155.765	2.51	0.59	379	96.93%	0	0	0	0	67	17%	195	50%	1.24	\$221,296	\$170,819
NewSub8	532	128.7627	4.13	0.66	477	89.66%	0	0	0	0	30	6%	183	34%	1.57	\$145,011	\$131,819
NewSub9	888	233.0969	3.81	0.65	810	91.22%	8	0	0	0	82	9%	115	13%	1.40	\$186,888	\$150,628
NewSub10	511	149.2213	3.42	0.61	482	94.32%	5	0	0	0	70	14%	179	35%	1.36	\$215,728	\$211,558
NewSub11	173	78.86674	2.19	0.22	154	89.02%	0	0	0	0	8	5%	0	0%	1.18	\$262,968	Insufficient Data
NewSub12	875	217.9358	4.01	0.66	764	87.31%	0	0	0	0	45	5%	59	7%	1.36	\$235,420	\$180,228
UIN1	3416	244.1807	13.99	0.55	49	1.43%	1	116	513	14	34	1%	290	8%	1.27	111,439	Insufficient Data
UIN2	731	169.7995	4.31	0.75	292	39.95%	0	0	79	6	99	14%	359	49%	1.39	105,549	N/A
TOWNWIDE	20168	8924.663	2.26	0.82	10317	51.16%	47	689	3990	245	2968	15%	5318	26%	1.41		

Appendix FN 1 - Baseline Metrics For Neighborhoods

Analysis Code	Townhouse/Rowhouse Average MV	% of Streets with Sidewalks	# units with transit access	% of units with transit access	# units trail access	% of units with trail access	# units park access	% of units with park access	# units elementary access	% of units elementary access	# units assigned elementary school	% units assigned elementary school	# units grocery access	% of units with grocery access	# units pharmacy access	% of units with pharmacy access
Old1	N/A	75.71%	478	77.35%	388	62.78%	352	56.96%	611	98.87%	213	34.47%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Old2	Insufficient Data	100.00%	524	95.80%	345	63.07%	350	63.99%	358	65.45%	123	22.49%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Old3	N/A	97.18%	252	51.22%	282	57.32%	123	25.00%	492	100.00%	492	100.00%	0	0.00%	72	14.63%
EarlySub1	\$114,080	88.16%	552	67.98%	376	46.31%	543	66.87%	807	99.38%	799	98.40%	47	5.79%	102	12.56%
EarlySub2	N/A	97.06%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	132	21.15%	356	57.05%	0	0.00%	299	47.92%	411	65.87%
EarlySub3	N/A	88.89%	317	44.96%	268	38.01%	252	35.74%	401	56.88%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10	1.42%
EarlySub4	N/A	100.00%	28	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	28	100.00%	28	100.00%	28	100.00%	19	67.86%
EarlySub5	N/A	67.01%	560	75.17%	509	68.32%	453	60.81%	737	98.93%	724	97.18%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
EarlySub6	N/A	100.00%	548	69.19%	224	28.28%	151	19.07%	792	100.00%	792	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
EarlySub7	Insufficient Data	98.82%	890	64.49%	0	0.00%	640	46.38%	1380	100.00%	1341	97.17%	161	11.67%	279	20.22%
EarlySub8	N/A	100.00%	270	50.37%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	536	100.00%	437	81.53%	20	3.73%	20	3.73%
EarlySub9	N/A	90.91%	758	94.16%	272	33.79%	149	18.51%	801	99.50%	620	77.02%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
EarlySub10	N/A	90.14%	392	71.40%	18	3.28%	0	0.00%	549	100.00%	549	100.00%	53	9.65%	53	9.65%
EarlySub11	N/A	100.00%	382	75.94%	0	0.00%	129	25.65%	503	100.00%	503	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub1	N/A	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	625	83.78%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub2	Insufficient Data	77.78%	81	51.27%	0	0.00%	47	29.75%	158	100.00%	66	41.77%	67	42.41%	67	42.41%
NewSub3	N/A	73.53%	144	29.69%	144	29.69%	9	1.86%	44	9.07%	44	9.07%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub4	N/A	95.24%	0	0.00%	90	15.36%	0	0.00%	36	6.14%	36	6.14%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub5	N/A	93.33%	587	100.00%	367	62.52%	367	62.52%	464	79.05%	459	78.19%	432	73.59%	148	25.21%
NewSub6	\$183,025	84.62%	96	35.96%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	12	4.49%	0	0.00%	216	80.90%	219	82.02%
NewSub7	N/A	86.27%	0	0.00%	243	62.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub8	\$129,193	63.64%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	474	89.10%	504	94.74%	164	30.83%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub9	N/A	90.18%	152	16.96%	382	42.63%	458	51.12%	887	99.00%	754	84.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub10	\$251,600	84.72%	23	4.46%	385	74.61%	206	39.92%	504	97.67%	504	97.67%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub11	\$162,331	69.57%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	173	100.00%	173	100.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
NewSub12	N/A	78.95%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	20	2.29%	833	95.20%	696	79.54%	0	0.00%	5	0.57%
UIN1	N/A	93.70%	3268	80.77%	2316	57.24%	2079	51.38%	3101	76.64%	2429	60.03%	0	0.00%	686	16.96%
UIN2	N/A	92.23%	703	86.79%	293	36.17%	235	29.01%	688	84.94%	558	68.89%	0	0.00%	29	3.58%
TOWNWIDE			16226	80.45%	11289	55.97%	11527	57.15%	20780	83.47%	16372	65.77%	1406	6.97%	4873	24.16%

ELEMENT APPENDIX

Appendix E1: ELEMENTS BASELINE METRICS

Housing

Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source
	Housing diversity index by neighborhood	See Framework Metrics				
	Total Housing Units		Town	20,915	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
	Median home value	All	Town	\$162,300	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
		New	Town	\$271,000	2010-2013	ACS 2015 5-year
	Median rent		Town	\$827	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
	% Homeownership		Town	51%	2015	MCRPC
	Average sales price	New Home	BN	\$304K	2016	Realtors Association
		All Homes	BN	\$171K	2016	Realtors Association
H1	Average cost of new construction per square foot		BN	\$148	2016	Realtors Association
	# Residential construction permits	Single Family Detached	Town	61	2014	TON
		Single Family Attached	Town	17	2014	TON
		Multi Family	Town	6 buildings (74 Units)	2014	TON
		Mixed-Use	Town	1 building (23 units)	2014	TON
	# Code violations per neighborhood		Neighborhood	Unavailable		TON
	Housing cost burden	Renters	Town	2,940	2011 - 2014	HUD
		Owners	Town	335	2012 - 2014	HUD

Economic Vitality

Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source
	Jobs by stage	All jobs	County	145,400	2016	Youreconomy.org
		Self-employed	County	0.90%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		2-9	County	17.80%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		10-99	County	33.90%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		100-499	County	14.40%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		500+	County	30%	2016	Youreconomy.org
	Jobs by headquarter location	Resident jobs	County	80%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		Non-resident	County	11.10%	2016	Youreconomy.org
		Non-commercial	County	8.90%	2016	Youreconomy.org
	Jobs by types	Full-time	County	Unavailable		
		Seasonal	County	Unavailable		
EV1	Unemployment Levels		County	5.10%	2016	BLS - Annual Average
	Labor Force		County	89,679	2016	BLS - Annual Average
	Income Levels		County	Unavailable		BLS
	Investments	Angel investments, private equity, etc		Unavailable		

	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source
	Patents	Total	County	437	NA	https://www.uspto.gov
		# in most recent year	County	74	2015	https://www.uspto.gov
	Sales	All	County	24B	2016	Youreconomy.org
		Per Employee	County	166K	2016	Youreconomy.org
		Per Business	County	2.4M	2016	Youreconomy.org
Performance of the Innovation District						
EV2	Number and Type of Town government datasets	Collected	Town	Unavailable		Town of Normal
		Made available through open data portal	Town	Unavailable		Town of Normal
	Tools/systems established within the Town governemnt	Gather and analyze data	Town	Unavailable		Town of Normal
		Measure/report/communicate data	Town	Unavailable		Town of Normal
	Policy and Administrative commitment toward	Percent budget dedicated towards Smart City Initiatives	Town	Unavailable		Town of Normal
EV3	Trends in major revenue streams	State and Local Sales Tax Revenue	Town	Negative	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		Property Tax	Town	Positive	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		State Income Tax	Town	\$4.96 Million (Negative Trend)	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		Utility Tax Revenue	Town	\$4.19 Million (Negative Trend)	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
	Online sales data			unavailable		
	Assessed Property Value	EAV	Town	\$862.54 Million (Positive Trend)	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
	Tax Rate	Municipal Rate	Town	11.20%	2016-2017	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
	Permits	Total permits	Town	1,035	2016	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		Residential remodel	Town	67.10%	2016	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		Commercial remodel	Town	19.50%	2016	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
		Single Family Homes	Town	7.50%	2016	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017
All other		Town	5.90%	2016	Town FT & C Report 2016-2017	
Health & Sustainability						
Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source
HS1	Fast food restaurants	# Restaurants/1000 residents	County	0.75	2012	USDA Food Environment Atlas
	# of street trees		Town	Unavailable		
	% of housing units within 0.25 miles of	grocery store	Town	7%	2016	MCRPC
		pharmacy	Town	24%	2016	MCRPC
		park	Town	57%	2016	MCRPC
		trail	Town	56%	2016	MCRPC
		30-min or better transit stop	Town	80%	2016	MCRPC
	% of units within 1 mile of	assigned elementary school	Town	66%	2016	MCRPC
		any elementary school	Town	83%	2016	MCRPC
	Miles of bike lanes		Town	1.4 miles	2016	TON
	Trail miles		Town	15 miles	2015	TON Parks & Rec Plan Update
	Acres of parkland per resident	neighborhood & community parks, natural areas, trails	Town	8.5 acres/person	2015	TON Parks & Rec Plan Update
	Crashes per year	fatalities	Town	1	2015	IDOT
		injuries	Town	269	2015	IDOT
total crashes		Town	2,040	2015	IDOT	

Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	
HS1	Suicides		County	22	2015	MCHD	
	Violent crime rate		Town			TON Police Department	
	Link-Node ratio	Town wide average	Town	1.41	2017	MCRPC	
	% of streets with sidewalks	sidewalk on at least one side	Town	75%	2017		
	Access scores	walk score		Town	38	2017	walkscore.com
		bike score		Town	Unavailable		walkscore.com
		transit score		Town	Unavailable		walkscore.com
	Commute mode share	walk		Town	8.30%	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
		bike		Town	0.70%	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
		transit		Town	3%	2015	ACS 2015 5-year
car			Town	83.20%	2015	ACS 2015 5-year	
other			Town	4.80%	2015	ACS 2015 5-year	
# of students walking to and from school		Unit 5	Unavailable				
Infrastructure and Public Safety							
Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	
IP 1	Corporate Area		Town	18.3 Square Miles	2010	Decennial Census	
	Population Density	Number of people per square mile	Town	2,861	2010	McGIS and MCRPC	
	Lane miles of streets		Town	451	2016	TON	
	Complete Streets		Town	0.5 Mile			
	Number of HH with Fire Response Zones	4 Minute		Town	Unavailable		
		5 Minute		Town	Unavailable		
		6 Minute		Town	Unavailable		
	Water Mains		Town	200 miles	2017	TON	
	Sanitary Sewer		Town	180 miles	2017	TON	
	Storm sewer		Town	100 miles	2017	TON	
Detention Ponds		Town	8 (approximately 2.3 acres)	2017	TON		
LEED Certified Community Facilities		Town	3	2017	MCRPC		
Humanitarian and Social Aspects							
Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	
HSA1	Diversity	on Boards and Commission	Town	Unavailable			
	Institutional markers	Of inclusiveness and commitment	Town	Unavailable			
	Civic Participation	Voting		Town	Unavailable		
		Volunteering		Town	Unavailable		
		Membership in Civic Groups		Town	Unavailable		
# Events	That attract diverse population	Town	Unavailable				
HSA3	GINI Index		Town	0.469	2015	ACS 2015 5-year	
	# of residents below poverty level		Town	11,684 (23.8%)	2015	ACS 2015 5-year	
	Cost of Living Index			Unavailable			
	Median earnings	For people without a college diploma		Unavailable			

Community Identity & Public Places							
Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	
CP1	Town-sponsored events by season	Spring	Town	Unavailable			
		Summer	Town	Unavailable			
		Fall	Town	Unavailable			
		Winter	Town	Unavailable			
		All	Town	Unavailable			
CP2	public events by season	Spring	County	Unavailable			
		Summer	County	Unavailable			
		Fall	County	Unavailable			
		Winter	County	Unavailable			
		All	County	Unavailable			
	Property values near public amenities	Trail	Town	Unavailable			
		Parks	Town	Unavailable			
		Uptown	Town	Unavailable			
		ISSCS	Town	Unavailable			
	Total public art installations		Town	Unavailable			
Town and Gown							
Goal	Indicator	Indicator detail	Geography	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	
TG1	# of Collaborative Projects	Town & Education Institutions	Town	Unavailable			
	Student retention after graduation		Town	Unavailable			
TG2	Residential Density	UIN1	Neighborhood	See Framework Metrics		MCRPC	
		UIN2	Neighborhood	See Framework Metrics		MCRPC	
	Nuisances	UIN1	Neighborhood		Unavailable		NPD
		UIN2	Neighborhood		Unavailable		NPD
	Residential Market Values	UIN2	Neighborhood	\$100K - \$150K	2016	MCRPC	
	Residential Rents	UIN1	Neighborhood		Unavailable		
		UIN2	Neighborhood		Unavailable		
Commercial Rents	LC 3 - ISU Oriented Center	Center		Unavailable			

Economic Vitality Appendix

Guidance to develop a municipal IT master Plan

adapted from the blog post titled “Build a City IT Master Plan” by Barbara Thornton¹ on the knowledge network of the International City County Management Association (ICMA).

Set a mission - The City manager should pull together department heads (or other appropriate staff) to set forth a mission statement. This statement, which will drive the rest of the process, should take into account the needs of staff and citizens, efficiencies that can be achieved through technology, cost savings, and other aspects.

Inventory current technology and software - Make a list of all software programs and technologies the Town owns, leases, or otherwise uses. Include the software name, company name, date of original acquisition, terms of use, location (desktop, local server, remote server, “cloud” server), annual cost, date of annual renewal, and primary user department (finance, inspections, police, etc.).

Create a checklist for assessing software/hardware technology to keep or acquire – This assessment should take into account compatibility with open data standards and existing city technologies, full access/control for city staff at all times, user-friendliness and adaptability to changing needs, cost-effectiveness, accessibility by desktop and mobile devices, and user privacy protections.

Identify gaps – Review the inventory, score, and rank of each product based on the checklist discussed above. Identify products to phase out/cancel or expand/re-configure. Identify categories of operations/services that need new software/technology.

Build in civic engagement– Survey Town departments regarding their existing civic engagement tools. Survey citizens and elected officials to get their recommendations on civic engagement tools. Prepare a list of applications, website functionalities, and other tools that could meet these needs.

Review & Ratify – In a series of small-group meetings with city staff (organized by department, function, and geographic area), review the mission and the proposed plan for existing and new technologies. Gather feedback, ideas, and concerns.

Create, adopt, and implement the plan – Combine inventory, gaps, proposed new software, and technologies along with the mission statement into a draft plan. Solicit comments on this draft plan, make necessary changes, and take it to the Council for adoption.

Effective strategies to implement Big Data initiatives

The report “Ten Actions to Implement Big Data Initiatives: A Study of 65 Cities” (conducted by IBM) identified the following practices as proven effective by cities that currently deploy big data development.

1. *Think about a “smart city system,”* not just data: Consider how big data contributes to smart city development and how data generated through connected technologies can be integrated and analyzed.
2. *Demonstrate executive commitment* to evidence-based policymaking by establishing a vision and articulating plans for integrating big data into enterprise-wide strategies.
3. *Institutionalize policies* associated with open data, analytics, and data privacy through legislation or executive orders.
4. *Encourage a culture* that embraces bottom-up innovation and change.
5. *Involve the public* in data governance.
6. *Build a multi-departmental team* to develop big data strategies, which will improve data integration and analysis.
7. *Build collaborative capacity and expertise* with staff training and system development so service departments can share their programming expertise and statistical knowledge.
8. *Designate regular networking representatives* who work with stakeholders to gain insights and leverage limited resources.
9. *Develop a multiyear strategic data plan* that includes open data portal rules, new data collection assignments and future hardware, and software purchasing requirements.
10. *Communicate the insights* gathered from big data initiatives with citizens: Real-life stories of policy implications will make open data and data analytics more relevant.

SMART URBAN SYSTEM EXAMPLES

1. **Smart buildings** use sensors and software to monitor and control a wide range of building functions – lighting, energy, water, HVAC, communications, etc. To lead the Smart Building movement, a city must 1) ensure that its own municipal buildings adhere to Smart Building targets, 2) adopt building codes that enable Smart Building technologies, and 3) create incentives to assist building owners in making their buildings smart.
2. **Smart energy systems** use smart devices that help system operators, predict, diagnose and mitigate issues. Installed at homes and businesses, smart meters for electricity, gas, and water provide two-way communication between the customer and the utility. These combine with smart-building devices like thermostats and appliances to create significant energy savings.
3. **Smart transportation systems** use advanced analytics and instrumentation to reduce traffic and congestion, empower public safety personnel, and suggest alternative routes. Parking can be made more efficient through instrumentation and mobile apps. Traveler information systems and real-time route planning can plot multi-modal routes for travelers. Smart transportation systems increase mobility, livability, and a community's competitive advantage.
4. **Smart water and waste water systems** use GIS technology to map and monitor expensive physical infrastructure assets, analytics to measure consumption and detect leaks, sensor technology to monitor water quality, track and monitor green infrastructure performance, and “close the loop” along local watersheds.
5. **Smart waste systems** use GIS, instrumentation, and analytics to improve waste collection, material recovery, energy recovery, and disposal. Micro sensors on trash containers communicate their fill-level status to the central station, Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tags on garbage and recycling carts enable the cities to gather and analyze disposal patterns. GIS- and GPS-based truck routing optimizes operations.
6. **Smart public safety systems** use optical devices and other instrumentation to help agencies and personnel capture data and use it to raise situational awareness in the field. Response times can be greatly reduced by two-way connectivity with data centers. Crime rates can be lowered by preemptive mechanisms enabled by data analytics. Predictive analysis can lead to better public safety planning.
7. **Smart finance systems** use acceptance devices (such as Parking meters and Utility meters) and payment form factors (such as electronic wallets) to enable smart payments. Open data standards combined with smart finance systems can predict people's preferences and significantly improve the city's ability to plan for the future.

Oklahoma's Innovation District Audit Deck

http://www.okcinnovation.com/Websites/okcid/files/OKCAuditDeck_revised4-28reduced.pdf

Appendix HSA-1 Race and Law Enforcement Sub Group Report

**TOWN OF NORMAL: RACE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT: SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDANCE
FROM TOWN OF NORMAL 2040 VISION SUB-GROUP**

August 2017

SUB-GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Town of Normal 2040 Vision Team Representatives:

Jennifer Carrillo	Marcos Mendez	Michael Straza
Joe Cleary	Christina Schulz	Jennifer Swartout
Dontae Latson	Kathy Steadman	
Kevin McCarthy	Karen Stipp	

Town of Normal Representatives: Rick Bleichner, Mercy Davison, Mark Peterson

McLean County Regional Planning Commission representative: Vasu Pinnamaraju

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OVERVIEW

Town of Normal 2040 Vision

We have a place for you in our vibrant, prosperous, and connected community. We aspire to go above and beyond Normal in: Social Equity. Ours is a compassionate community that strives for social consciousness, responsiveness, and justice.

This Vision Statement and Social Equity Core Value description were the centerpieces to our sub-group's reflection on race and law enforcement.

Town of Normal's work in articulating a process for exploring race and law enforcement comes right out of its own vision for the future, a future in which quality of place, cooperation, and community involvement from diverse stakeholders are normal—Radically Normal, a term coined in the *2040 Vision Report*.

2017 Sub-Group Process

The Race and Law Enforcement discussion group was formed in January 2017 as a follow-up to the year-long 2040 Vision planning process that concluded November 2016. This in itself was not unexpected. The 2040 Vision Plan was intended to underpin the Town's Comprehensive Plan, and several members of the original 2040 Vision group have participated in working groups that commenced earlier this year.

During the visioning process, our Vision Team discussed social equity at a time when communities across the nation were grappling with violent incidents involving law enforcement and communities of color. To ensure this discussion continued, we inserted into the *2040 Vision* a "Gaps to Close" section, which highlights the specific need for a public dialogue and acknowledgment of injustice, discrimination, and racism.

A subset of the 2040 Vision Team has met monthly with the City Manager and Police Chief for the past seven months to discuss ways to effectively address challenges involving race and law enforcement in our community as a *systems issue*. We were not called to address a specific incident or take a particular side (*for* these people or *against* those people). Individuals participating in the discussion represent diverse points of view and bring a variety of personal and professional experiences to the table.

This local conversation continues in the context of the national conversation on the same topic. Unlike other communities that are blaming actions and actors, this sub-group recognizes issues related to race and law enforcement as systemic and cultural. So, instead of one single or small set of "fixes," we prefer a broader approach, one that engages as many stakeholders as possible to participate in the conversation and articulate solutions.

Our strategy has been to dive deeply into this complex topic. Time has been spent with compelling information, a combination of:

- Our personal stories,
- Data collected locally and nationally, and
- Benchmarked practices from other communities across the country.

Our goal has been to bring key areas of concern into focus and to identify potential actionable items before a more public process is started, and our presumption is that this issue will need to be continuously re-evaluated into the future. **[See Appendix and Recommended Resources]**

Stakeholders to Support Implementation of Community-Engagement Process

To address a vision for social equity, generally, as well as injustice, discrimination, and racism, specifically, is a community-wide endeavor. The following list includes organizations that our sub-group knows to call upon as change leaders; we trust they will continue to be intentional in how they partner.

- Town of Normal
 - Mayor and Town Council
 - Town of Normal Management Team
 - Police Department
 - Human Relations Committee
 - Staff/departments
- Community
 - Members, with diversity in mind (i.e. race, ethnicity, language, gender, socio-economic, age, ability, sexual orientation, citizenship status)
 - Organizations, including but not limited to: Black Lives Matter, Boys and Girls Club, Conexiones Latinas, Immigration Project, Mid Central Community Action (MCAA), Minority and Police Partnership (MAPP); NAACP, Not in Our Town (NIOT), Prairie Pride Coalition, Project Oz, YWCA
 - Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington-Normal and other faith-based organizations
- Illinois State University and ISU Police Department
- Normal Public Library
- U5 and D87 School Districts

Priorities to Balance

With our eye on a more public process in the near future, we ask that anyone affiliated with this work going forward balance multiple priorities—things we must get right in order to be effective and to get closer to social equity.

1. **Acknowledge racism exists.** Accept that implicit bias exists in our institutions, including law enforcement. Use information to complement our personal experiences in order to learn how implicit bias presents itself in such institutions as law enforcement.
2. **Affirm Normal Police Department (NPD).** The NPD is committed to a culture of excellence, continuous improvement, and continuous learning—reflected in both policy and practice. We are proud of our highly professional and eight-time [CALEA](#)-accredited police department. We affirm NPD as one of sixteen Gold-Standard departments recognized by CALEA, which is an incredible accomplishment that few departments even attempt, let alone earn. NPD is a partner positioned just right to effect the changes we seek in our community.
3. **Maintain culture change as our goal.** As indicated earlier in this report, we are not seeking to eliminate individual bad actors or actions. Instead, we want to link individual efforts to a unifying big picture, one that unites NPD Core Values with Town of Normal Vision and Radically Normal.
4. **Reach as wide and diverse an audience as possible.** Doing so will demonstrate race and law enforcement as an issue belonging to the community, all the while creating meeting spaces conducive to the kind of active listening, candid feedback, and effective communication that build trust, relationships, and consensus.

EXPANSION OF SOCIAL EQUITY CORE VALUE

Sub-Group Vision Statements

We offer the following to complement the *2040 Vision Report*.

1. **Connect to pride in place.** This was a big piece of our vision work. In Normal, we come together to voice opinions. We create spaces where ideas are discussed and affirm public design of space. We work to connect community relationship building to events that feel more welcoming to more people by being intentional about the kind of art, culture, vendors, and events that we invite into our public spaces.
2. **Consider and reflect upon our own racism every day,** the institutional and unintentional nature of racism as embedded within society, the systems that compose it, as well as our conscious and unconscious attitudes.
3. **Recognize that imbalances of power work against our ability to discuss (and disagree) as equals.** Dialogue and interactions alone cannot fix today's dynamic.
4. **Expect continued change in the role of policing, away from reactively addressing crime, toward proactively addressing factors that lead to crime.** Enhance existing policies and practices that are already underway within the police department that lead to more positive engagements between police and residents, as well as other community stakeholders. Bring everyone together, including police. Address risk factors that could lead to crime, which, in turn, would reduce crime and associated calls to the police.
5. **Acknowledge the positives that are part of this process, as well as those that will result from this process, while acknowledging they are not necessarily easy to achieve.** Community members in Normal, including internal stars within NPD, will undoubtedly benefit from driving our change process. Valuable benchmarking is available through our neighbors in Central Illinois and the Midwest. Support for Normal's community policing will result in initiatives that influence trust and promote positive interactions. Intentional relationships with police and community members will influence our quality of life and social equity.

SUB-GROUP FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

African Americans are disproportionately stopped, arrested, and incarcerated. That is a fact in America today. In looking at our data, we see that here, too. We must engage around, recognize, and address the disproportionate stopping, arresting, and incarceration of people of color. **[See Appendix and Recommended Reading.]**

We do not accept being part of the national trend. We urge Town of Normal to demonstrate a likewise recognition.

Based on our community's current strengths, available resources, and commitment to community-wide continuous improvement, this is not a ground-up task. Instead, it is an up-our-game task. We have strengths in our community to call upon, available resources and stakeholders to activate, and experience from past community-focused improvements to draw upon.

Please read the following recommendations as options to consider. We have organized our recommendations into the following categories, with corresponding specific actions to follow:

- I. **Public Process:** Recommendations about how to engage the public
- II. **Data Regarding How the Police and Community Interact:** Emphasizes how to position data as part of this continuous-improvement effort and as a key component to any future public process
- III. **Community Culture Change Regarding Police and Law Enforcement:** Recommendations for building a shared understanding about the evolution of policing and law enforcement as a community resource
- IV. **NPD Continuous Improvement and Policy Level Change:** Recommendations about what NPD can do to advance today's community-policing approach and deepen relationships with community members
- V. **For Further Study—Boards to Consider:** Options for traditional Community Review Board (CRB) and original idea suggested by sub-group, a Community Policing Culture Board (CPCB)

Know that the following recommendations have been informed by sub-group discussion, data analysis, and benchmarking.

I. Public Process

We recommend planning, implementing, and learning from a public process that is characterized by diverse stakeholder engagement, dialogue, trust building, and action planning. As sub-group member Karen Stipp has said, "This is the starting point, not the finish line."

We think that the following types of public-process events would benefit community members.

- A. **Round-table discussions:** Seek round-table discussions that allow individuals to connect with one another, to the issue of racism in our institutions, including law enforcement, and to the commitment of building a better community. The sub-group's process for the first half of 2017 in determining recommendations turned out to be a *pilot*—community members, NPD representation, and ToN management and Town Council representation *is the key* to moving forward with integrity and sensitivity.
- B. **Listening sessions:** Public-listening/sharing opportunities to acknowledge bias, even implicit bias, and brainstorm strategies to mitigate bias at individual up to systemic levels.

- C. **Community education:** Informational lectures, panel discussions, informational or demonstration videos online (via NPD website, perhaps), or (other) informational sessions to be held free of charge. Numerous terms, trends, data points, and socio-economic/demographic truths need to be available to the public. Individual experience alone will not be enough to help build the awareness and willingness to change because each of us is limited to what we have personally experienced—and that will not be enough of the “whole picture” to truly prepare us for informed decision-making and accountability-holding.

Community education may also include activities that build awareness of diversity, racial bias, etc. In addition, community education to include a re-introduction of Normal Police Department (NPD) mission and services within the community with emphasis on minority and under-served communities. The re-introduction to NPD could also include sharing information related to what police work looks like today, including walk-through of duties, regulations and mandates, as well as risks and pay-offs. Through these kinds of learning events, community members may better understand when they should call the police for assistance.

- D. **Social gatherings, use of public-meeting spaces, such as Uptown Circle:** Uptown Circle events can be used to promote cultural diversity, social justice, support of law enforcement, etc. Use our “heart” of Normal to reinforce the work being done to improve the relationship of community members with one another and with authority-holders, such as Police, elected officials, and Town of Normal staff. Reinforce the connectedness and even some of the “fun” of gathering together in Uptown that we have come to expect/rely upon/enjoy through shared use of this public space to entertain, educate, make visible, and grow community. Other public venues could include: Police neighborhood meetings; standing communication loops and networks among Town of Normal and NPD stakeholders, and community influencers/leaders.

II. Data Re: How Police and Community Interact

Our recommended public process must combine personal experience with data and information. We recommend that data is generated, published, and analyzed that accurately captures the full picture of people’s interactions with the police.

- A. **Share data tracked by NPD,** and publish it in reader-friendly ways, such as:
- Time of day when police-resident interactions occur
 - Pedestrian data (demographics of pedestrians stopped)
 - Traffic stop data (by race)
 - Aggregate and publish greater and more targeted data. Identify missing and incomplete data, as well as identify data systems and process limitations.
 - Problem solve and forecast system and process needs and budget impacts
- B. **Move beyond conventional data collection** to something that better reflects and captures the community—who we are and how we interact with our police department. This type of data, we think, will reflect purpose-driven policing (not just reactive data associated with stops and arrests).

III. Community Culture Change Re: Policing and Law Enforcement

The traditional culture of policing needs to shift, as indicated in both national trends and locally available information, such as the recent Stevenson Center Report entitled “Select Disparities in the Criminal Justice System in McLean County.”

As indicated previously in this sub-group report, we need not characterize the opportunity to change as strictly reactive but, instead, as an opportunity to embrace needed improvement.

We think that the following will be important indicators of a significant shift in how policing and law enforcement function and how they are perceived by community members.

- A. **Advance community policing approaches that are in use today.** “Community policing” is a term that is commonly defined as a holistic, integrated philosophy and organizational strategy to transform the way law enforcement and the community interact, share power, and work to improve the quality of life throughout the community. It seeks to proactively address the conditions that give rise to such public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. **[See Appendix.]**
- B. **Develop and monitor a Community Policing Master Plan.** Allow the public process described in Recommendation #1 to inform the plan.
- C. **Monitor key-performance indicators (KPIs)** associated with the culture change we seek, which, in this case, is the nature and extent of community partnerships. For example:
 - What exists?
 - Who participates? How?
 - What demographics do participants represent? How representative is that of our population?
 - What impact are those partnerships having on leading and lagging indicators of crime, safety, quality-of-life, etc.?
- D. **Continue pursuing 2040 Vision Core Values.**

IV. NPD Continuous Improvement and Policy-Level Changes

As stated in the *President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, Final Report*: “Law Enforcement cannot build community trust if it is seen as an occupying force coming in from outside to rule and control the community.” This quote aligns with what was shared by Chief Rick Bleichner as part of our sub-group. The Town of Normal Police Department wants to be perceived positively, to enjoy trusting and working relationships with all members of the community, including within communities that are currently under-served—all of which ensures NPD lives its Mission Statement every day.

In some cases, the following suggestions coincide with what NPD is already underway with in terms of continuous-improvement target areas and prospective policy-level changes.

- A. Continuous improvement target areas include:
 - Increased transparency, including transparency of mission and mission-focused efforts
 - Training and professional development, such as recognizing bias/racism, de-escalation, and skills associated with relationship-building
 - Incorporation of community members to ensure training reflects Town of Normal residents’ contexts and needs, such as through:
 - Small-group discussion or scenarios in which NPD officers practice what they learned
 - Determining what training to get based on benchmarking and listening to community member needs (ex. LGBTQIA)
 - Modeling what is meant by “community policing,” so our community understands it as a combination of relationship and action, not just a concept

- B. Suggested indicators of improved community-police relationships include :
- Foot and bike patrols; business and vacation checks (non-enforcement)
 - Establishment and communication of alternative response and reduced use of force
 - Demonstration of how use of data is informing priorities and practices. For example, related to use of force, if rates are looked at in which enforcement is used (per demographic group/age), then that information can be used to understand where reductions of force may be most needed in order to achieve greater consistency in rates
 - Engage youth, as well as minority and under-served communities
- C. Information sharing that shows NPD taking things head-on, such as:
- Update Town of Normal Police Department website with relevant policies made more transparent to residents (note: not *all* NPD policies)
 - Create and publish Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) through documents and demonstration videos, through website and social media
 - Link to Comprehensive Plan
- D. Support career development within policing and police-department initiatives, including but not limited to:
- Connecting police officers to other leaders in the community to learn about leadership and managing change
 - Creating a positive-reinforcement approach that focuses on high performers within NPD

V. For Further Study: Type of Board Reflective of Community Policing

1. Community Relations Board

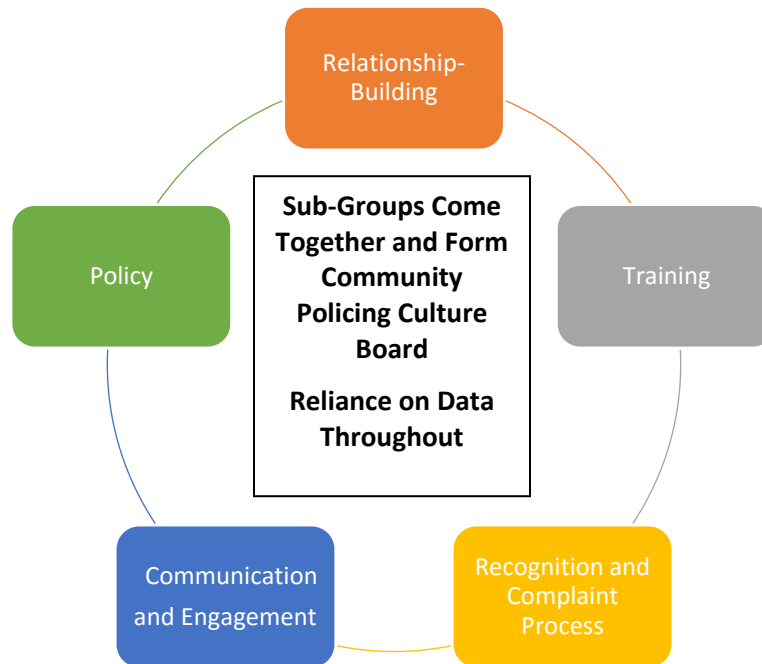
A Community Relations Board (CRB) is worthy of further consideration. If, after further study it is determined that a CRB is, indeed, appropriate and beneficial, such could then be created by the Town Council through the passage of an ordinance establishing the board. Additional efforts to define roles and responsibilities would follow.

2. Community Policing Culture Board (CPCB)

As an original idea proposed by the sub-group, we would like Town of Normal to please consider the creation of something less reactive and more holistic than the traditional CRB as the type of board to put into place that formalizes community policing as the approach of choice.

- A. Establish a CPCB. A graphic of what we have in mind for that structure appears on the next page.
- B. Rely on the CPCB as an ongoing, formal, and public structure for ensuring that the changes we seek become not just adopted in individual-community-member habits but *institutionalized* as our Radically Normal culture.
- C. Pilot this approach using current ad hoc group participants to start such recommended actions as: Listening sessions, police officer neighborhood meetings, CRB discussion, youth/police outreach meetings with community groups (i.e. YWCA, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, church youth groups).

Suggested Community Policing Culture Board (CPCB)



Some important notes about this type of board to consider:

- The primary purpose of the CPCB would be to focus on culture-change initiatives associated with the 2040 Vision Social Equity Core Value, with an emphasis on race and law enforcement through community partnership and engagement.
- Implementation of this structure requires additional input about how it could best function through listening sessions. Incremental and well planned public sessions are essential for establishing trust in the community and for demonstrating that listening is really occurring while maintaining the integrity of everyone involved.
- Further, we would recommend testing for a period of time before recommending it as a permanent Board within the Town of Normal.
- Eventually, we see this as a standing board with committees that will work in parallel on deeper dives with recommendations on topics listed above, which contribute to holistic community policing.
- One additional note: "Community policing" may not be the term we end up with if community members want to go beyond connotations associated with it today.

APPENDIX

Characteristics of a public process that we recommend:

- **Candor.** Direct conversations between community members and NPD stakeholders toward, “What will we do?”
- **Emotion.** We fully expect some of our interactions with one another to be emotionally difficult. Emphasize the value of honesty, as well as the restoration and healing that comes from sharing one another’s stories and viewpoints.
- **Active listening and learning.** Listen, learn, exchange. These are the suggested rules of engagement for small- and large-group conversations and events.
- **Pushing through pain and anger toward recommended solutions and decision-making.** In order to inform outcomes in which we all share a stake, it is important that we help one another work through our emotions, such as anger, pain, sense of injustice, etc. Grounding suggestions and decisions in constructive cooperation will be essential to take shared ownership of the outcomes for our community that we all want to see succeed.

More About Community Policing

A useful reference for learning about community policing is the Community Oriented Policing Services “Community Policing Defined” guide available through the U.S. Department of Justice:

<https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/vets-to-cops/e030917193-CP-Defined.pdf>

In that guide, the three key components to community policing are described as:

- **Community Partnership.** Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police. Stakeholders identified include law enforcement, other government agencies, community members/groups, non-profits and service providers, as well as private businesses and media.
- **Organizational Transformation.** The alignment of organizational management, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving.
- **Problem solving.** The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems to develop and evaluate effective responses. A model for problem solving is offered through the acronym SARA: Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment.

Additionally, through benchmarking information gathered by the YWCA, our sub-group learned about some of the defining features of community policing, which will likely be of equal interest to the Town Council, including:

- **Redefines who is considered an expert.** Recognizes and respects community members as experts in their own lives, on the needs of their own communities—and necessarily—as experts who have valuable input into how police should work with them.
- **Empowers community members to participate in decision-making.** Civilian community members are empowered to make changes to policing to better serve the needs of their community. This model willingly engages community members in the process of developing and evaluating departmental policies and procedures.
- **Transforms the role of police towards a more proactive, community-centered, solution-focused role.** Community policing proposes that resources are best used when law enforcement officers act as community liaisons who proactively address local issues and root causes of crime, build relationships, and work to improve community health and overall quality of life for all.

Suggested Data

Some of the data that we reviewed indicates that, although tied to our 2040 Vision big-picture effort, improvements to our police department and within the law-enforcement system is more than a proactive exercise. There is a clear need to improve based on the level of implicit bias that exists today at both policy and practice levels, as well as at the cultural level.

Data that our sub-group found compelling includes the percentage of stops among people of color, which is disproportionate with their overall percentage within our population. The disproportionate impact on non-white populations evident in today's law enforcement system has our attention.

We recommend that readers of this report also engage with available data to learn more, including the Stevenson Center Report, which was covered by WGLT in August.

<http://wgl.t.org/post/report-finds-widespread-racial-economic-disparities-bloomington-normal#stream/0>

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Coates, Ta-Nehisi. *Between the World and Me*.

Shapiro, Tomas. *Black Wealth, White Wealth*.

<http://www.calea.org/>

“Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: A Review of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Various Models,” Joseph De Angelis, Richard Rosenthal, Brian Buchner. OJP Diagnostic Center.

Community Policing Defined., The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014.

<https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/vets-to-cops/e030917193-CP-Defined.pdf>

Duncan, Ryan, et al. Select Disparities in the Criminal Justice System in McLean County. 2017, *Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development*.

NPR’s Radiolab “Shots Fired”—1st part (episode 2850): [Shots Fired: Part 1](#).

Madison Police Department website: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/>
<http://www.cityofmadison.com/police/community/>

PBS News Hour: <http://to.pbs.org/2sBQTZj>

“Prohibition of Bias Enforcement/Racial Profiling,” Normal Police Department. January 2017.

“Proposed Solutions and Best Practices,” YWCA. March 2017.

“Race & the Criminal Justice System,” YWCA. March 2017.

“Racism in the U.S.,” YWCA. March 2017.

“Recommendations for Reform: Restoring Trust Between the Chicago Police and the Communities They Serve,” Police Accountability Task Force (Chicago). April 2016. <https://chicagopatf.org>

Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools*.

Baldwin, James. *The Fire Next Time*.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*.

Wilkerson, Isabel. *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America’s Great Migration*.

This American Life. “School to Prison Pipeline”

“Traffic Stop Data Collection: 2016 Traffic Stop Overview,” Town of Normal Police Department. February 27, 2017.

13th (film)

Valente, Judith. “Report Finds Widespread Racial, Economic Disparities In Bloomington-Normal.” WGLT, 9 May 2017, wgl.t.org/post/report-finds-widespread-racial-economic-disparities-bloomington-normal.

YW Mission movies <http://www.ywcamclean.org/site/c.bs1MI3NHKfK4F/b.8085667/k.CA29/Events.htm>

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